Gasoline Lines • SALT Politics • Anne Tyler on Muriel Spark
Memoirs: John Osborne on Ford's • Joe Rauh on Sirica's

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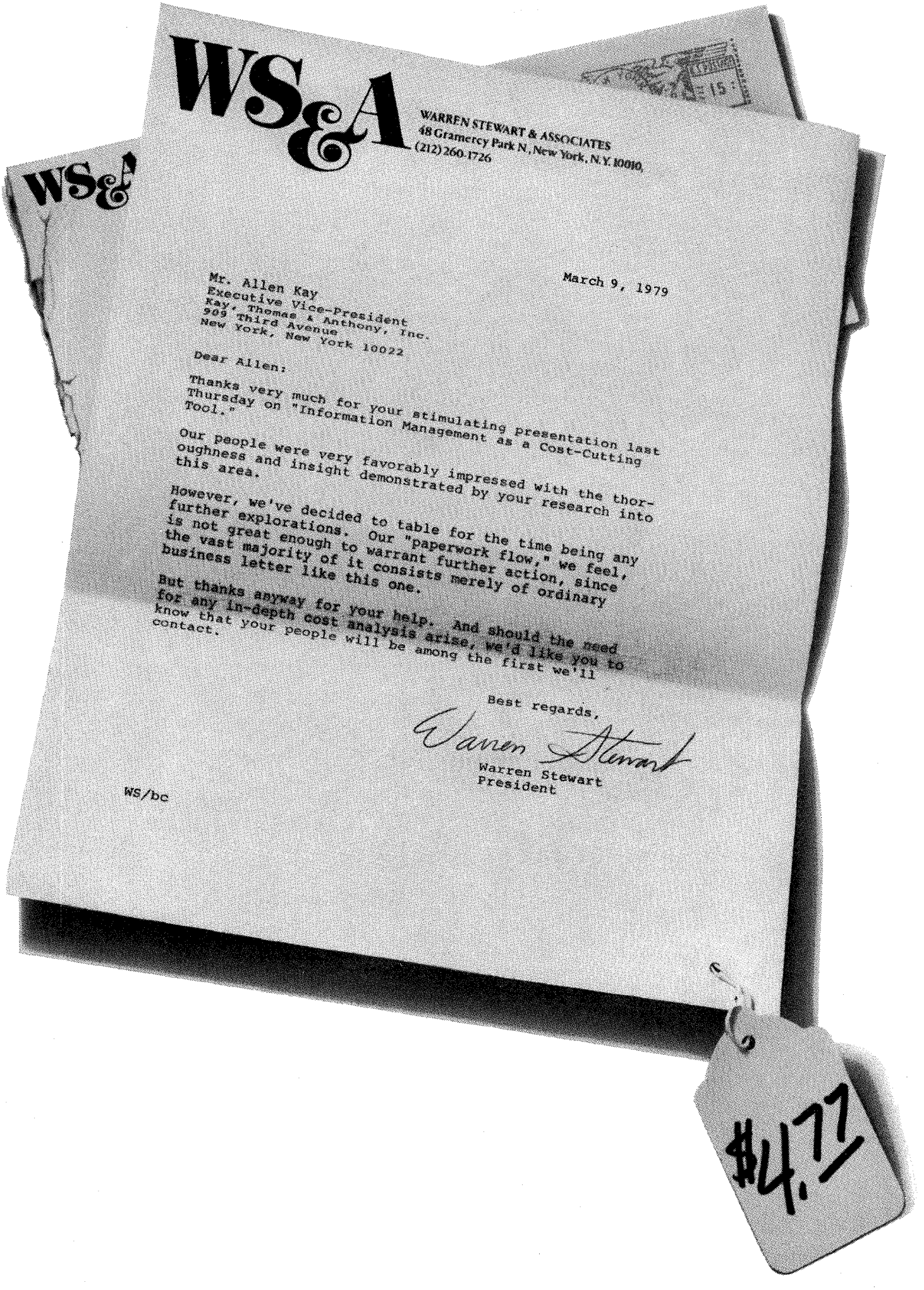

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March 9, 1979

Mr. Allen Kay
Executive Vice-President
Kay, Thomas & Anthony, Inc.
909 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear Allen:

Thanks very much for your stimulating presentation last Thursday on "Information Management as a Cost-Cutting Tool."

Our people were very favorably impressed with the thoroughness and insight demonstrated by your research into this area.

However, we've decided to table for the time being any further explorations. Our "paperwork flow," we feel, is not great enough to warrant further action, since the vast majority of it consists merely of ordinary business letter like this one.

But thanks anyway for your help. And should the need for any in-depth cost analysis arise, we'd like you to know that your people will be among the first we'll contact.

Best regards,

Warren Stewart

Warren Stewart
President

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TRB

from Washington
May 26, 1979

Multicrisis

Historians will ask the mood in Washington in the early summer of 1979—two and a half years into Jimmy Carter's term. It was a mood of confused, low-keyed, multiple crisis. It was a mood of vexation, alienation and growing uncertainty. There was not just one crisis; there were simultaneous crises. Who was in charge? Americans looked wistfully at Canada whose election came May 22. The Canadian election campaign lasted only two months (and followed the British one of one month). The 1980 American election campaign had already started and would last two years, while it warped relationships of Congress and president. When the Canadian election finished, voters would know (as they did in England) who was running things. At any rate the party that had the majority in Ottawa would form the government and would put its program into effect (for better or worse) or face a vote of no confidence. Mr. Carter, by contrast, has experienced one vote of no confidence after another on a kind of weekly basis, from a Congress dominated by his own party. There was little he could do about it save complain, while the public charged him with "lack of leadership." Americans were habituated to this way of doing things and took it for granted, though fewer voters bothered to go to the polls. The Canadian election would bring out over 70 percent. The American bicentennial election of 1976 brought out less than 54 percent.

Confusion along the Potomac produced a series of stirring scenes, and was great fun for journalists. A succession of Republican hopefuls declared their candidacy and lined up like cafeteria customers. Also, the Three Mile Island accident brought out the first big Washington demonstration since Vietnam in a crowd that stretched away and away on either side of the west front of the Capitol. Everybody agreed somebody was to blame but couldn't decide who.

In California, six years after the Arab oil embargo and the warnings of three presidents, panic lines suddenly formed at filling stations, and the anxiety quivered across the nation. Everybody agreed somebody was to blame, but. . . .

Stagflation continued. Everybody agreed somebody was to blame.

The attitude to President Carter was curious. He was not hated like the unfortunate Hoover in 1929, but just patronized. It was like Truman in 1947-48. (Truman's polls were lower than Carter's today.) Carter achieved the Panama Canal treaties, the Middle East agreement, the plane deal with Egypt and the Saudis, normalization with China, the SALT agreement. So what? Prices kept rising! He lacked passion, said a former speech-writer. He was well-meaning and honest, polls reported, but not a leader.

Would a "leader" have sustained the defeats Jimmy Carter had in Congress? He pleaded for action against energy shortages in 1977 as the moral equivalent of war, and Congress sat on its hands for a year and a half. To support his anti-inflation guidelines he urged a "wage insurance" program giving workers tax benefits to compensate for any sacrifices. Congress killed it. He urged Congress to pass the hospital cost stabilization law to halt skyrocketing health costs. Congress killed it.

Carter submitted a stand-by gasoline rationing program which Congress had ordered in 1975. The idea was simple, that lifeboats are a good thing on ocean liners even if you don't hit an iceberg. The House killed the measure, despite a florid last-minute appeal by Speaker Tip O'Neill, who likened it to the stand-by draft law defeated 40 years before. Some House speeches were hard to follow: critics, in effect, said that lifeboats on liners are incongruous; that the proposed boats were cramped, and that the bill did nothing to abolish icebergs anyway. The vote was 246 to 159; 106 Democrats voted against the president's plan.

I don't recall any situation quite like this in modern times, and it stems back, I think, to a number of causes. There is the near-collapse of the party system; there is the new way of picking presidential candidates—by state primaries rather than by political conventions. Primarily at the moment, I think, it is the continued inflation which seems ripening now for a recession. Mr. Carter apparently doesn't know what to do about it. Nor does Congress, which is still having an idiotic flirtation with a proposed constitutional amendment for a mandatory balanced budget—like the Prohibition amendment of 1920. Inflation weakens trust in Carter on all fronts, including the culminating test of SALT II ratification.

For a man without passion, Carter is hitting out pretty strongly. He launched the drive for SALT ratification in New York last month with a powerful speech delivered with what I would call quiet passion. He lashed out at the House for defeating the stand-by gasoline rationing plan. He said he was "shocked and embarrassed." He said "a majority of the House of Representatives has been willing to put local or parochial interests" ahead of "the interest of our nation." This is pretty tough stuff for a man dismissed as an emotional tabbycat. On the SALT speech, GOP presidential candidate Howard Baker was publicly shocked (on ABC's "Issues and Answers") at the Carter thought that if the Senate votes "no" other nations will consider us a "warmonger." The aggrieved Baker should know that advocates of SALT are already being charged with being soft on communism, and the debate is just heating up.

The most persuasive argument for SALT yet made was by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Secretary of Defense Harold Brown on NBC's "Meet the Press," May 13. (It is available for 50 cents, and stamps, from Kelly Press, Box 8648, Washington, DC 20011.) They are the two strongest members of the Carter cabinet and are quiet, trustworthy, reasonable men, Brown sitting with arms folded, Vance with hands overlaid. They address each other familiarly, and you are going to hear more, I think, of the Cyrus-and-Harold show. As a final thought I leave you with the comment of Harold, that he stood 200 miles from a thermonuclear bomb explosion, before dawn, and could read a newspaper for 10 or 15 seconds afterward! Try that again —10 or 15 seconds. SALT stabilizes affairs a little but leaves 2250 such weapons with each nation. Nobody wins a nuclear war.

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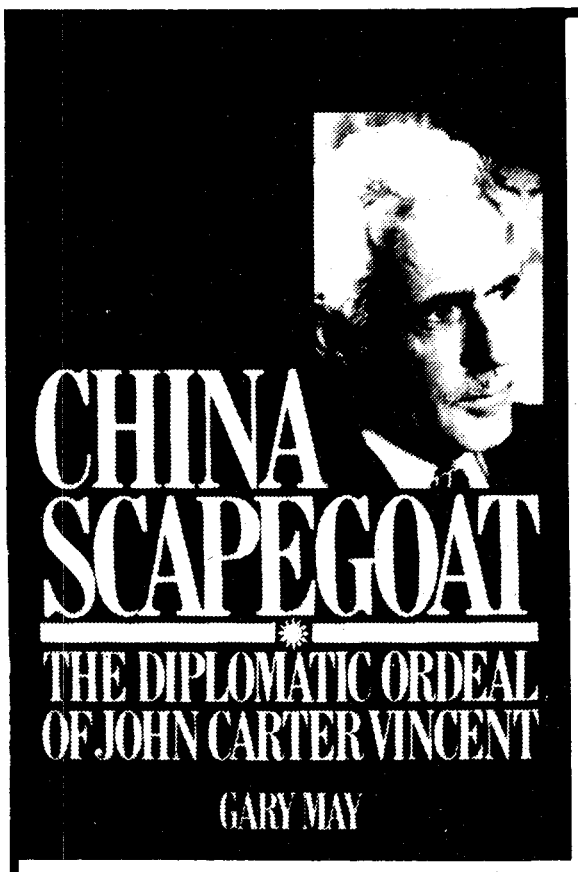

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Comparative Financial Review

	Years ended December 31, 1977	1976
Income		
Life premiums	$22,340,297	$16,150,742
Accident and health premiums	25,683,413	23,593,214
Investment and other income	4,799,481	4,090,525
Total income	52,823,191	43,834,481
Benefits and expenses		
Life claims and other benefits	4,126,231	3,735,055
Accident and health claims	12,430,024	11,644,002
Increase in liability for future policy benefits	12,196,239	8,711,984
Amortization of policy acquisition costs	5,183,133	4,431,061
Commissions	5,943,151	5,224,771
General expenses and insurance taxes	5,869,697	5,652,642
Dividends to policyholders	298,064	299,032
	46,046,539	39,698,547
Income before income taxes and realized investment gains (losses)	6,776,652	4,135,934
Provision for income taxes		
Current	—	—
Deferred	1,909,150	1,209,252
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	4,867,502	2,926,682
Realized investment gains (losses)	11,364	356,057
Net income	$ 4,878,866	$ 3,282,739
Earnings per share		
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	$ 2.88	$ 1.76
Realized investment gains (losses)	.01	.21
Net income	$ 2.89	$ 1.97

Assets	$116,000,000
Insurance in Force	$1,289,599,000

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

May 26, 1979

Tank Queues

For two years now President Carter has been predicting the imminent exhaustion of the world's oil supplies, but not until long lines began to form at California gas stations two weeks ago did the message finally begin to get through. Having predicted that the sky was falling, he must have taken some satisfaction in seeing a few pieces at last crash to earth. At a meeting with business leaders at the White House, Carter couldn't resist an I-told-you-so, scolding the American people for their refusal "to face the inevitable prospect of fuel shortages." He also took the opportunity to criticize Congress for its rejection of his gasoline rationing proposal, American consumers for their profligate use of fuel, and skeptics for trying to blame the shortage on the oil companies.

But Carter's own words dramatized his administration's confusion. Carter didn't acknowledge that the current gasoline allocation system is responsible for much of the mess. Neither did he concede that his own insistence on keeping price controls on gasoline have kept consumption higher than it otherwise would be. Nor did he mention that he has encouraged conspiracy theories about the oil companies, the same ones he now dismisses, by blaming them every time his energy proposals have run into opposition.

For all its public relations value to the Carter administration, the shortage of gasoline in California doesn't offer persuasive evidence that the world is rapidly running out of oil. The shortage is partially the result of a series of bad breaks beyond any American's control, partially the result of a self-feeding panic psychology, and partially the result of misguided government policies.

The most visible cause of the shortages in California and elsewhere is the overthrow of the shah of Iran last January, which led to a 69-day shutdown of oil production by the world's second largest supplier. The halt in shipments reduced US imports of oil by 600,000 barrels a day, about seven percent of normal supply. In March the new regime began pumping oil again, but at a lower level than before. Meanwhile OPEC had used tight world supplies as an excuse to raise its price to $14.50 a barrel, with member nations permitted to add on whatever surcharge the market would bear. After Iranian production resumed, Saudi Arabia agreed to cut back its output to keep world prices high. But while total world production was falling, demand for gasoline by American consumers continued to grow. US consumption rose four percent during the first three months of 1979; in California it jumped 17 percent.

Ordinarily these changes might have had no serious repercussions, but they came at a time when gasoline supplies were already low. Last summer the Carter administration, fearing wintertime shortages of home heating oil, had urged refiners to shift production from motor gasoline to what are known in the industry as "middle distillates"—diesel fuel and home heating oil. The refiners did as requested. Unfortunately last fall proved to be unseasonably warm, stimulating Americans to drive more and consume more gasoline than usual. By the end of November gasoline stocks were depleted to a level regarded by the Department of Energy as the bare minimum. During the winter oil firms managed to rebuild their inventories somewhat, but the Iranian crisis and the driving surge that hit in the first quarter of the year reduced them back to

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dangerously low levels.

The immediate problem in California, and in a few isolated parts of the country like Washington, DC, is that once people heard about the impending shortage, a lot of them went out and filled up their tanks. The average credit card purchase in California during the first week of panic buying was only three dollars—less than half the usual average. One reason gas stations were running short of supplies is that a lot more motorists than usual were driving around with full tanks.

American oil companies might have softened the impact of the drop in Iranian production by buying more oil from other suppliers on the "spot" market. But DOE strongly discouraged them from doing so because it hoped to force OPEC to cut its prices. Faced with depleted stocks even before the peak summer driving season had begun, the major oil companies and the nation's independent refiners began this spring to reduce their shipments to retail dealers.

Here is where the real trouble began. Under DOE rules, a refining company that wants to reduce the amount of gasoline it provides to its dealers must follow an "allocation" formula. The allocation rules in effect freeze supply patterns. The purpose is to prevent refineries from favoring their own stations and cutting off independent and small retailers. The problem is that the rules make it next to impossible for refiners to shift supplies around to meet changes in demand. When California drivers increased their consumption sharply this year, dealers had no way to accommodate the higher demand and soon ran short in that state.

Any allocation rules would tend to inhibit needed adjustments, but DOE's regulations have a more serious flaw. Until March 1, the allocation rules were based on supply figures for 1972—meaning that stations were allotted gasoline supplies based on what they sold in a corresponding month *seven years ago*. To get an idea what this means, take two hypothetical stations which sold the same amount of gas in 1972. One has doubled its business since then; the other has had its sales cut in half. Under the DOE rules, each would get the same allocation. On top of this problem is DOE's confusion. In the last four months, refiners have been saddled with three successive sets of allocation rules. Under the first, allocations were calculated using 1973 as the base period. On March 1, DOE changed the base period to 1978, applying the new rules to shipments in March, April and May. On June 1 the base period was supposed to be changed to 1977, but now DOE says the 1978 base period will be used until the end of September. There are some exceptions to the rules for stations that have drastically increased sales since last year.

The allocation rules deserve most of the blame for the long lines in California, but not all. Curiously, there is no shortage of crude oil there; in fact there is a glut. California's real problem lies with its refineries. In the first place, most of them are designed for light grades of crude, and much of the crude now available in California is heavy-grade Alaskan oil. The Alaskan oil is also high in sulphur content, so cleaning it up to meet California's unusually high anti-pollution standards is particularly expensive. Heavy grade crude oil also yields less gasoline per barrel than lighter grades.

Refineries present a problem elsewhere, namely that there aren't enough of them to keep up with rising demand. So far this year American refiners have been producing just about as much gasoline as possible, but they're strapped by insufficient capacity. Why don't firms build more gasoline refineries? Mainly because there are federal price controls on gasoline but not on other petroleum products such as home heating oil.

The method of the current price controls is not to hold down prices but to freeze profits at their 1973 level. A retail dealer figures the price he can charge this way. He takes the selling price on each grade of gasoline as of May 15, 1973. He adds to that the difference between his cost per gallon then and his cost now. Then he adds up to three cents per gallon for cost increases attributable to wages and utilities, and then costs due to increased rent and to the installation of the vapor recovery systems required by the Environmental Protection Agency. Then he adds on all his state and federal taxes to get the maximum legal selling price. But there is another wrinkle. If at any time a dealer has charged *less* than the maximum, he can "bank" the difference and add it on whenever he thinks the market will bear it. The rules are so complicated that it's impossible for the average driver to know whether or not he's being charged a legal price and many dealers say it's hard for them to figure it out themselves. But the crucial feature is that a dealer cannot increase his total profit margin over what it was in 1973 (except by adding on "bank" costs): if it was a penny then, it can't be more than a penny now. Federal price rules apply to refiners as well as retailers, and here again the point is to restrict the total profit margin. A refiner who invests in new facilities can pass through the cost of interest on its borrowed funds and the cost of depreciation, but no a return on its investment. Consequently the refiner has no incentive to expand its refining capacity. DOE's own Office of Competition blames DOE price rules fo

(continued on page 11)

Staff Addition

With this issue, Leon Wieseltier joins the *New Republic* as a contributing editor. He is a graduate student in Jewish history and literature at Harvard, where he was recently elected to the Society of Fellows. He has published essays in the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *New York Review of Books*, the *American Scholar* and other magazines.

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Correspondence

Chinese hospitals

To the editors:

M.M.K. wrote: "Hospitals [in the Peoples Republic of China] may be backward and unsanitary, but they exist." ("Rich and Poor," *TNR*, April 21). I traveled in China during November 1974. I am not an expert but nine of the 20 people in the group in which I traveled were experts—physicians, pediatricians, gynecologists, public health specialists. We visited hospitals, medical schools, commune clinics, laboratories and pharmacologies, family planning clinics, a dental clinic and numerous residential, school and factory health facilities. Everything we saw looked well-worn, even old; no buildings looked new; we saw nothing that can be described as luxurious. But everywhere—absolute cleanliness, no trash, dirt or disorder. Even the patients were in perfectly clean clothes—from the newborn babies in wooden incubators to the elderly patients in an "honored old persons" village in a large commune an hour and a half outside of Peking.

The Chinese pioneered the technique of rejoining severed limbs. Their immunization rates are high. Their 30-year battle to eliminate venereal disease has been very successful. Good prenatal, maternity and neo-natal care and birth planning have reduced the incidence of persons born with handicapping conditions. All this—health care and public health comparable to our own—is remarkable in a country termed by the Chinese "developing" and by M.M.K. "underdeveloped."

Rezsin Adams
Albany, New York

Redefining human rights

To the editors:

Re: David Hawk's "Human Rights at Half-Time," April 7, 1979, a couple of points should be made. First, admittedly the Carter administration has called attention to a certain limited class of human rights violations across the globe and this has been valuable, whatever the occasional diplomatic repercussions. Second, calling attention only to this limited class—namely, suppression of freedom of political participation, expressions of political criticism, and judicial civil rights (including fair trial, respect for due process of law, humane treatment of the accused)—has been and still is a form of unjust discrimination. Millions of individuals across the globe have a great number of other rights violated which, however, are not lamented, even by Mr. Hawk. For example, the human rights to engage in voluntary associations, to enter into mutually chosen contracts, to practice one's freely chosen religion, to earn and keep property in a variety of forms (land, money, goods, artistic creations, scientific inventions, etc.) and so forth are ignored by our government and by such agencies as Amnesty International. (I suspect the reason is that our government, with implicit approval of Amnesty International, violates such human rights left and right throughout its sphere of jurisdiction and influence.

Third, Mr. Hawk will not even attempt to define human rights, thus leaving us in the dark for purposes of evaluating whether what Mr. Carter does and he approves really deserves *our* approval.

Finally, it must simply be admitted that advocacy of human rights, even in its limited way, amounts to endorsement of certain universal principles. This is a rejection of cultural or ethnic relativism. But then we should like to have it discussed in your kind of magazine why some but not other such principles should be advocated and given official backing? Why do those whose liberty of political participation and liberty of expression, etc., are abridged deserve support but those whose liberty of movement, liberty of trade, liberty of association, and so forth are violated do not deserve it?

Tibor R. Machan
University of California
Santa Barbara, California

Halberstam mockery

To the editors:

Nicholas Lemann's mockery of David Halberstam is a disgrace (*TNR*, May 5). His "review" (if such it can be called) belongs in the *National Lampoon*, not *TNR*. I doubt it would ever have made it into the "old" *TNR*. To poke fun is easy—to comment seriously requires knowledge. What are Lemann's qualifications anyway? Has he written a major book? Has he worked for a major newspaper or network? Does employment on a slick regional advertising vehicle like the *Texas Monthly* (which ordinarily concerns itself with such weighty matters as who makes the best bowl of chili in Texas), qualify Lemann to "review" the work of one of our most respected, serious journalists? I think not. I think Lemann is operating from a great fund of ignorance about Halberstam's subject. He has covered up that ignorance in glib, snide mimicry—trash journalism at its worst!

George F. Hopkins
Western Illinois University
Macomb, Illinois

To the editors:

That Nicholas Lemann parody which you had the great good sense to put on the cover was the best thing of its kind I've read since the famous Wolcott Gibbs piece on *Time* and Henry Luce.

Ray Scheer
Vice President, RCA
Washington, DC

Out of Control

To the editors:

Let me see if I get this right. According to Ken Bode (review of *The Streets Were Paved with Gold*, *TNR*, April 28), one way for the federal government to solve its multitudinous fiscal woes is "by controlling doctors' fees and hospital charges." At the same time, decontrol New York's rent controls. How about if you decontrol Bode instead?

J. R. Cochran
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

"Values" with no holds barred

To the editors:

I was shocked to read "The Horny Dialogues," (*TNR*, April 21), Bill Miller's deprecation of an event which had the intent to explore "values" with no holds barred; in the purest of environments and on the supposedly highest of plateaus—an exercise to privately learn and test.

Well, even someone in academia can sometimes wear that transparent and seductive "corporate veil" we in the valley are often accused of hiding behind. Not that there was no humor at the conclave; true humor begets serious direction pushing toward an improved social environment in which creative ideas rather than single words or

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phrases out of context might flourish for a better society. What purpose is served by such jest, when a fragile relationship has just begun and the bride and groom have yet to trust each other—let alone speak to each other? Only to see one's name in print—such commercialism.

Alfred R. Schneider
Vice President, ABC
New York, New York

Reaching outside the family

To the editors:

Poor Patrick Brogan! In his lengthy piece on Northern Ireland in the May 12 *New Republic* ("A Portrait of the Irish as a Tough Nut"), he winds up his thesis by writing that ". . . names like Biaggi and Wolff should stay out of the family quarrel. . . ." Oh come on Pat. Why be selective in your criticism? What about Teddy Kennedy fighting for human rights in Chile—how about Tip O'Neill fighting for human rights for Soviet Jews? Is that reaching outside the family too? The philosophy is simple—there is a wrong—we seek to right it.

The fact is, that Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Irish National Caucus whose combined membership of Irish Americans approaches one million, asked me specifically to create and chair the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee for Irish Affairs. How these groups can be ignored in describing the "general Irish view" is beyond me. The fact is, with respect to Ireland and human rights—I have kept it in the family—the family of man.

Mario Biaggi, MC
Chairman, Ad Hoc Congressional
Committee for Irish Affairs
Washington, DC

To the editors:

The acerbity with which Patrick Brogan, who is an Englishman of Irish antecedents, attacks the Irish in his article, "A Portrait of the Irish as a Tough Nut" (*TNR*, May 12), is of the intensity of the apostate who is torn and twisted by belonging to both parties, and forced to repudiate one. Patrick Brogan, correspondent of the *Times* of London, is an advocate of Britain, and his writing and his employment show it. His errors are too numerous to enumerate, but by any standard to have one killed in 750 of the population of Northern Ireland is a high number, yet apparently not high enough for him to think excessive.

The issue that divides the people who support Britain in Ireland, and those who are Irish, is not religion but nationality. The majority in the North prefer to be British, and they are supported by Britain; and the minority are Irish, and prefer it, and want to be associated with the Republic of Ireland. Although the two parties divide along religious lines, the differences have nothing to do with theology, but have to do with political preferences; and the emphasis on religion in the American and British press is a British ruse, and the ignorance and prejudice of both the British and American reporters generally.

The critical factor in the Irish situation is that Britain is still in Ireland as a colonial power. It is because of this that the Irish problem exists today. It is because Britain subsidizes the North that the government remains distinct from the Republic, and that it exists at all. Without such a subsidy, it would not.

Britain must leave Ireland if there is ever to be peace in Ireland. Britain must notify the Unionists of the North that she is leaving at a particular time. Once she has taken this step, and the North knows it does not have Britain behind it, the Northern party would have no alternative but to meet with the Republic to form a federal union, with local self-government for the North and South, and with a central government for foreign affairs and defense. Such a plan has already been accepted by the government of the Republic. It remains but for those in the North to acquiesce.

This would serve the best interests of both parties, facilitate trade and prosperity, and remove discord.

John Branigan
Staten Island, New York

Insanity on parade

To the editors:

With the arrival of Stephen Chapman, the radicalism of the *New Republic* is now complete. *TNR* forgets, however, that the radical ideas fade as quickly as the setting sun. Where are the radicals of the 1960s now—the Communists of the 1920s and 1930s? Chapman sounds like one of those brash young men who got to the top in the musical "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying." His articles are perversely radical, like his remarks about sex. In one issue, he raises doubts about whether he ought to marry, since a poll shows that women are more interested in reading than in sex. Apparently, Chapman would expect his fiancée to be part of a poll before he would consider marrying her. Chapman is a typical arrogant product of an ingenious society going mad.

I prefer *TNR*'s Peretz who remarked to me, "Yes, insanity parades all around us."

Stephen Housman
Fort Lee, New Jersey

Maurice or Jacques?

To the editors:

I was away when you published Sidney Hook's letter (*TNR*, May 5). Whether he is right or I am, on the general point, a misleading error by so prominent an academic figure needs to be corrected. He tries to reinforce his point with a reference to one Merleau-Ponty—with no first name—as if this was the Merleau-Ponty whose work I had quoted. It is clear that Mr. Hook is referring to the controversial French philosopher of the pre- and post-war years, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, whereas I made it clear in my article that I was referring to another French philosopher, Jacques Merleau-Ponty. Even I would not have quoted the earlier Merleau-Ponty to support any view of my own.

Henry Fairlie
Washington, DC

Kowtowing to third-world prejudices

To the editors:

Whatever the merits or demerits of the Rhodesian internal settlement ("Rhodesian Shadows," *TNR*, May 5), the hard fact remains that it was endorsed by a substantial majority of the Rhodesian people in what appears to have been a fair election. Therefore, all nations who subscribe to the principle of national self-determination are morally bound to recognize Bishop Muzorewa's government, and to lift sanctions. If the US would stand by its professed principles, instead of kowtowing to third-world prejudices, the black majority might, in due course, be able to assume full power, and the US would regain some of the respect it has lost in recent years.

H. C. H. Darley
Houston, Texas

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discouraging investments in new refining facilities.

The disincentive to refinery investment has especially constricted the production of unleaded gasoline, which requires more expensive processing than leaded gasoline. Gasoline price controls have been in effect since 1973, which means they inhibited investment just when it was needed to accommodate the increased demand for unleaded gas mandated by new federal emission standards. Demand for unleaded gasoline has soared in recent years. In 1975 unleaded accounted for only 13 percent of total gasoline consumption; this year it will account for 42 percent. But refinery investment hasn't kept pace with the increase, and there is little hope that it will in the near future. DOE Deputy Secretary John O'Leary told Congress last December that no major refinery expansions or improvements are scheduled for the next two years, and he blamed it on his own department's price rules.

Carter hasn't handled these problems very well. His own Energy Department has documented the harm done by price controls on gasoline, but Carter and his inflation chief Alfred Kahn take the silly view that controls can't be lifted when prices are rising. Meanwhile, however, DOE has quit discouraging American refiners from buying on the spot market, reasoning that any oil is better than none. It has also announced that it may increase the permissible margin of profit on gasoline prices, which would provide a slightly greater incentive for refiners to expand capacity. The Energy Department also has begun to reexamine a potentially disastrous policy—encouraging refiners to shift production from gasoline to home heating oil well before the end of July, which is when the shift normally would occur. Changing over early would severely aggravate the relatively mild shortage the country is now enduring.

But the ultimate answer to the current problems, and the only way to ensure that they don't become permanent, is to eliminate DOE's regulations on gasoline prices and allocations. Price decontrol would promote the president's own oft-stated goal of conservation; it would also provide a sorely-needed boost to refinery investment. The way to prevent windfall profits by the oil companies is by a wellhead tax on domestic production of crude oil. (See "The Moral Equivalent of Verdun," *TNR*, April 14.) With such a tax in place, price controls on gasoline would be superfluous. With or without such a tax, gasoline price controls encourage excessive consumption of gasoline, thereby aggravating the oil crisis and increasing our dependence on OPEC. And as the current lines at service stations demonstrate, gasoline price controls—like any other price controls—cause needless shortages, confusion and misallocation of resources.

The only way to prevent gasoline shortages is to allow the price to rise in order to bring supply and demand into balance. Repealing the current rules for allocation would serve a related purpose—to let supplies be shared on the basis of market conditions and not old retail ledgers. That way the present shortage, which so far has caused distress only in California, can be spread more evenly over the entire country. That would be fairer and considerably less painful.

The Human Comedy

Jessica Mitford crosses the street against the light, as reported in the *Washington Post* of May 14:

> But then Decca, as she is called by her friends, has rarely cast her lot with prudence. "The truth is," she said, after waiting some minutes for her less courageous companions, "I was desperately afraid of traffic until my son showed me how to think about it in Boston once. He would point at the cars one by one and say, 'Look, think of that one as one of Franco's tanks, and think of that one over there as a subpoena-server from HUAC,' and before I knew it, we were across the square. And that seemed to do the trick."

The headline of the month (so far) from the May 8 *New York Times* business page:

> U.S. Steel Sees
> Need for Greater
> Profitability in '79

"Celebrities at Sea," from the May 13 Sunday *Times* travel section:

> A number of celebrities will speak about Royal Viking Line vessels this summer as the ships cruise the waters of Europe and Alaska. Among the speakers will be former Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg. . . . Justice Goldberg will join the Royal Viking Star in Copenhagen for a 25-day Mediterranean, Black Sea and Greek Isles cruise Aug. 10 to Sept. 4. He will talk about United States-European relations and the functioning of the Supreme Court.

Press release of the week (from the American Bar Association):

> Most Lawyers Feel Fees Charged Are Proper, Says Latest ABA LawPoll Survey
>
> CHICAGO, May 14—Lawyers feel that the fees they charge are neither too high nor too low. In other words, they are just right.
>
> That's what the latest LawPoll survey appearing in the May issue of the American Bar Association Journal discloses.
>
> Fifty-six percent of the lawyers queried in a

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> random sample by Kane, Parsons and Associates, a New York based opinion research firm, answered they thought the fees charged by attorneys are proper. . . .

And this week's mathematical puzzle, from a statistics-filled *Times* article May 13 about gasohol:

> Mr. White said, 'Widespread use of gasohol in a 10 percent mixture would reduce our reliance on oil by at least 20 percent, because you get less than half a barrel of gasoline out of a barrel of oil.'

Hint: If you could get only a hundredth of a barrel of gasoline out of a barrel of oil, would a 10 percent mixture of gasohol reduce our reliance on oil by 1000 percent?

(This is an experimental new feature. Reader contributions are welcome, and may even be rewarded. We are looking not for *New Yorker*-style reports on eccentrics or typographical errors, but rather for news items or quotations that—in what they say about the human comedy—cry out for no comment.)

White House Watch

Jerry, His Book

Gerald Ford's autobiography, *A Time to Heal* (Reader's Digest-Harper & Row; $12.95), is a pleasant reminder that he actually was President of the United States from August 9, 1974, to noon of January 20, 1977. The fact is not generally and totally forgotten, of course. But who remembers much more about his presidency than that he was the first President who'd never been elected either Vice President or President, that he pardoned Richard Nixon, and that he was defeated by Jimmy Carter in 1976? Trevor Armbrister, the *Reader's Digest* editor whom Ford picked from several candidates to do the writing before the Digest and Harper & Row advanced around one million dollars to Ford and his wife, Betty, for their separate books, does a good job of reflecting his man and writing pretty much as one would expect Ford to write if he could write. Which is to say, Ford comes out nice, dullish, and by no means the awkward clod that all too many of the journalists who covered his vice presidency and presidency depicted him as being. Betty Ford's *The Times of My Life* (also Reader's Digest-Harper & Row) appeared last November and was moderately well received. Neither book adds much to the record as it is known to people who followed the Ford presidency at all closely. But Jerry's book is worth buying and reading, which tells you more than many reviewers tell you nowadays about the books they profess to review.

The most notable addition to the record in the Ford book is petty but interesting. It concerns Ford's well-known dislike of James R. Schlesinger, the secretary of defense who was inherited from Richard Nixon, fired by Ford in the famous Cabinet massacre of October 20, 1975, and is Carter's secretary of energy. Schlesinger's and Ford's dislike and distrust of each other, Ford's conviction that Schlesinger didn't know how to deal with Congress, and Ford's concern that Schlesinger's and Henry Kissinger's personal and policy differences were creating an impression that Ford was not in command of his own administration, receive due and accurate note in the book. The addition has to do with Ford's irritation over reports soon after he succeeded Nixon that Schlesinger "had put our armed forces on alert just prior to Nixon's resignation."

The thrust of the reports was that the Joint Chiefs of Staff and its chairman, General George S. Brown, had been warned by Schlesinger to check with him before obeying any screwball orders that they might get from Nixon or the Nixon White House. The implication was that Nixon might try to save himself with a military coup. Ford said he "had to admonish Schlesinger" about the stories and continues in oddly ambiguous language: "Schlesinger never admitted to me that he had been the source of these reports, and right after our conversation I released a statement that 'I have been assured that no measures of this nature were actually undertaken.'" Ford says that he learned "months later" that the reports originated at a lunch Schlesinger had with a group of reporters on August 23, 1974. Many Washington reporters knew at the time that the lunch had occurred and that the stories had come from it.

Ford's added kicker in the book involves William P. Clements, a multimillionaire manufacturer of oil drilling equipment who was then deputy secretary of defense and was elected governor of Texas last November. Clements detested Schlesinger and Schlesinger, Ford reports, repeatedly tried to get Clements fired. According to Ford, General Brown assured Clements that "there was no alert" of the kind reportedly described by Schlesinger. Ford continues: "Shaken, Clements walked upstairs and entered Schlesinger's office. He mentioned the 'scare stories' in the press, said that they had obviously emanated from Schlesinger's lunch with the reporters, then asked, 'Why did you say all this?' At first Schlesinger didn't reply. Finally, he looked up and said, 'I don't know.'"

Schlesinger, who is under fire for his performance at the Department of Energy, could be seriously harmed by this story. Three of Ford's senior White House assistants tell me that he never told them the Clements story. The inclusion of it in this book is final evidence, if any were needed, of Ford's profound dislike of Schlesinger. Clements said through his press spokesman in Austin that the part of the story involving him "is absolutely correct." Schlesinger says he expressed his concern at the lunch that normal chain-of-command procedures be followed—meaning

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that any White House order be cleared with him. He says some of the news stories distorted and exaggerated what he said at the lunch. He says the Clements part of the story, including the confrontation with him, is false. A reporter who was at the lunch says the news stories understated what Schlesinger said. The reporter says Schlesinger expressed particular concern about what General Alexander Haig, then Nixon's and later Ford's White House staff chief, might order in Nixon's name.

The truth seems to be that the caution from Schlesinger to General Brown and the JCS was oral, not a formal written "alert." So Schlesinger at the time told Joseph Laitin, who was in Paris the day of the lunch and soon became Schlesinger's chief spokesman at the Pentagon. A Ford assistant says Ford told him that Schlesinger flatly denied to the new President that he was the source of the stories. Trevor Armbrister, explaining the ambiguous language in Ford's account of the August confrontation with Schlesinger, says Ford didn't accuse Schlesinger of denying that he was the source but left the impression that Schlesinger "just sat there, puffing his pipe and not saying much of anything."

Ford's account of the Nixon pardon and his reasons for granting it adds one fact to the record as it came to be known then and afterward. Ford returns again and again to the fact, well known then and afterward, that General Haig included the possibility of a pardon of Nixon among five options he said were open to Ford and Nixon just before Nixon resigned rather than face sure impeachment in the House and conviction by the Senate. Ford's evident preoccupation with it suggests to me—he never says this in the book and so far as I know has never said it to anyone—that he's edged close to a conviction or realization that Haig deliberately planted the thought of a pardon with him. One of Nixon's and later Ford's closest White House advisers thought so then and thinks so now. The added fact, one that Ford and involved advisers never mentioned at the time and up to Ford's departure from the White House—is that Ford's White House counsel and boyhood friend from Grand Rapids, Philip Buchen, was the last among Ford's senior White House intimates to be told that Haig had mentioned a pardon to Ford. John Marsh, Robert Hartmann and Bryce Harlow were told about it before Buchen was. They warned Ford that the suggestion could be "dynamite" for him if it became known prematurely. They persuaded him to tell Haig by telephone, in their presence, that the mention of a pardon had not influenced Ford, then still Vice President, in the slightest. Buchen was told about it only after he, as Ford's chief attorney, had drafted a letter assuring members of Congress that a pardon had never been mentioned to Ford before Ford succeeded Nixon.

Ford concludes his account of what he considers to have been early "misunderstandings" of the pardon with this passage: "Another misunderstanding erupted early in the week [following the pardon] when reporters asked Acting Press Secretary Jack Hushen if I was planning to grant a blanket pardon to Nixon's former aides. 'I am authorized to say this matter is now under study,' he [Hushen] replied. The truth is that I hadn't authorized him to say anything of the sort. I wasn't considering further pardons. I didn't know where he got that information. I was upset." Hushen, who is the Eaton Corporation's Washington representative, said after the passage was read to him on May 16: "The information that I delivered that day was worked out [before the press briefing] in the Oval Office by Bob Hartmann, the President and myself." Hartmann and Ford, I'm told by an official who corroborates Hushen, first thought of having him say that the matter of other pardons was "under consideration." They decided it would be better for him to say, "under study." No other pardons were granted.

Some of the advance book publicity had Ford expressing outright regret that he had invited Vice President Nelson Rockefeller to withdraw in late 1975 from consideration for nomination with Ford on the 1976 Republican ticket. Ford doesn't quite say it in the book, but he tells the story with evident shame. Rockefeller was convinced that Donald Rumsfeld, the White House staff chief who followed Haig, had put Howard (Bo) Callaway, Ford's first campaign chairman, up to running down Rockefeller and saying Republican conservatives would never accept him on the 1976 ticket. Rockefeller told me later, with great bitterness, that Ford "allowed it to happen, he didn't stop it." Ford acknowledges that on October 28, 1975, he told Rockefeller that some of the difficulties "might be eliminated if you were to indicate that you didn't want to be on the ticket in 1976. I'm not *asking* you to do that, I'm just stating the facts." He quotes Rockefeller's reply: "I understand. Well, it's probably better that I withdraw." He did, by letter. Ford ends his recollection of the October conversation: "As I walked him to the door, I put my arm around his shoulder. I was grateful for his expression of unselfishness, his willingness to do what was in the best interests of the party and the country—and me. At the same time, I was angry with myself for showing cowardice in not saying to the ultraconservatives, 'It's going to be Ford and Rockefeller, whatever the consequences.'" I believe that Ford would be President today if he had listened to his better self instead of picking Senator Robert Dole. Ford is markedly less vehement in his defense of the choice of Dole, in the book, than he used to be. He neglects to mention, among other relevant facts, that one of his trusted advisers, Melvin Laird, begged Ford not to ask Rockefeller to withdraw and begged Rockefeller not to do it.

There are personal bits that will seem corny to some readers but don't to me. After it became all but certain

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that Nixon would stop wavering from hour to hour, day to day, and resign, the Fords went to bed at about 1:30 of an August night. "As we lay there in the darkness, our hands reached out and touched simultaneously without either of us having said a word. Then we began to pray. . . . I concluded with a prayer from the fifth and sixth verses of chapter three of the Book of Proverbs: 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways, acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."Fifty years before, I had learned that prayer as a child in Sunday school." One of the strikingly few direct criticisms of Jimmy Carter in the book is that during his candidacy he paraded his born-again Christianity in a way that offended Ford.

On September 28, 1975, Ford was working on a speech with Bob Hartmann, his chief writer and a trusted assistant for many years, when Rear Admiral William Lukash, the White House physician, telephoned from the Bethesda Naval Hospital that Betty Ford's right breast had been found to be cancerous and was about to be removed. The doctors wouldn't know for several days whether the cancer had spread. "I put down the phone and tried ineffectually to focus on the speech again. But too many emotions were churning inside me. I stepped into a small bathroom adjoining the office and tried to wrestle those emotions under control. After a minute or so I returned to my desk. Hartmann looked at the expression on my face and understood immediately. 'Go ahead and cry,' he said, 'Do cry.' All my tensions and fears poured out in a brief flood of tears."

Ford used to deny that he cried the morning after the 1976 election when he appeared in the White House press room with his family and Betty read for him a "Dear Jimmy" letter he'd written to Carter. He cried, all right. We saw the tears. In this book, he doesn't admit it and he doesn't deny it.

John Osborne

On the Hill

Improved Odds

Suddenly, and for reasons that are not altogether clear, the chances for Senate ratification of the SALT II agreement have markedly improved. From a probable loser, as it appeared after the midterm elections last fall and through the Iran-Afghanistan "arc of crisis" crisis of the winter; from the uphill struggle it seemed to face even two weeks ago, as all-but-final agreement on its terms were about to be announced, the SALT treaty now appears to have an edge over the forces seeking to do it in. What's changed cannot be reduced to numbers. The Carter administration still is nowhere near having the support of the 67 senators needed for ratification. Probably 40 senators still are uncommitted, with maybe 20 hard against and 40 leaning in favor. Just now all the uncommitteds are competing with one another to demonstrate uncommittedness, skepticism, independence and probity. The latest NBC-Associated Press poll showed an actual drop in public support for SALT from February to March, and some administration officials anticipate further declines when surveys taken immediately after the May 10 treaty announcement are published.

But if the change in atmosphere is not measurable, it is palpable. All of a sudden, with an actual treaty close at hand, the opponents of SALT do not have the field to themselves any longer. The antis may have peaked too early. Just as the administration is wheeling in its heaviest artillery, including the detailed treaty itself, the president's bully pulpit, the secretary of defense, the commander of the Strategic Air Command, most of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the heads of government of America's NATO allies (Margaret Thatcher endorsed SALT last week), the opponents seem low on ammunition. The most serious SALT critics—Senator Henry Jackson, former Navy secretary Paul Nitze and the Committee on the Present Danger—have been firing at the treaty for more than two years. They have served the useful purpose of toughening the administration's bargaining positions with the Soviet Union and its outlook on US-Soviet relations. But, as polls indicate, they have not convinced the public that the SALT accord is a bad idea. (One survey indicated that 79 percent of the public is undecided on SALT II.) The changes critics have induced in administration policy probably will help pass the treaty.

Getting SALT ratified will be a delicate undertaking and President Carter could blow it, but he certainly has improved his position. The Middle East accord and normalization with China helped, though no one yet considers Jimmy Carter a master geopolitical strategist. But consider how far Carter has come from the days when he talked dreamily of eliminating nuclear weapons entirely, unilaterally began pulling US troops out of Korea, dropped the B-1 bomber and bobbled the neutron bomb decision. Carter now is defending SALT in terms of the national security interests of the United States, and not as a door-opening to Valhalla. Now he is talking about US-Soviet relations as a mix of cooperation and competition. The US is pushing for a medium-range ballistic missile for Europe and increased NATO military spending, and Carter seems on the verge of announcing (probably in early June, before the SALT summit in Vienna) a go-ahead on advanced development of a new generation of US land-based missiles. Carter now occupies the political middle ground in the SALT debate. He is denying it to SALT's opponents. Supporting SALT seems a prudent thing to do in the

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security interests of the US. Opposing it seems extreme.

The best evidence of the political sea change on SALT is the behavior of some potential opponents. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, an ideological soulmate of Senator Jackson, has indicated he will support SALT if US defense spending is increased. Senator Robert Dole has warned fellow Republican presidential candidates that "anyone who tries to ride all-out opposition to the SALT treaty into the White House will have the plank pulled from under him." The best evidence of all is that SALT's bitterest opponents have abandoned the strategy of trying to defeat SALT outright, which requires only 34 votes, and have retreated to one of trying to amend the treaty, which requires 51 votes. The shift is a confession that 34 senators cannot be found who are willing to accept responsibility for the consequences of SALT's defeat.

Even though the drift of things is pro-SALT, the administration faces deep difficulties in the path of ratification. A major challenge is: how to win support from Senate Republican leader Howard Baker? Actually the question is how to win over the 20 or so undecided senators who are Republicans. Baker has been thought key to their support, but some legislative strategists say a way may have to be found to work around Baker, if his demands are unacceptable. Baker was crucial in carrying the Panama Canal treaties through the Senate, but it cost him heavily among conservative Republicans. Baker wants to be the 1980 GOP presidential candidate, but conservatives are dominant among the voters in Republican primaries and delegates to Republican national conventions. Such people lean to the likes of former California governor Ronald Reagan and former Texas governor John B. Connally, both of whom stoutly oppose SALT. Connally supposedly is even passing the word that if he were nominated, he might pick as his running mate not a moderate to bind the party's wounds, but General Alexander M. Haig, who is retiring as NATO commander. Haig is expected to come out against SALT as soon as he takes off his uniform. He has practically done so with his uniform on.

Pro-SALT strategists assume that Baker shares Dole's perception that all-out opposition to SALT will be death to a GOP nominee next November, and that he would like again, as in the Panama debate, to play the "Arthur Vandenberg role" of Republican-statesman-who-saves-the-day. At the same time, somehow he has to look tough enough to get the nomination. It's thought, therefore, that Baker will try to force the administration and the Soviet Union to accept a significant improvement in the SALT treaty or in US strategic policy that he can call his own. The trouble is, Baker has not laid the technical and political groundwork for a specific amendment of this type. No one knows what he wants, and it isn't clear he knows what he wants. And so there is a risk that Baker will decide on something that proves simply impossible for the administration or Baker himself to wrestle out of Moscow. It would doom the treaty if there is an impasse and the 20 Republican undecideds get mad and decide to vote it down.

The administration presumably is working on Baker to make his choice soon. As an alternative, some SALT strategists have suggested other potential Vandenbergs might be cultivated, including Dole, Henry Bellmon of Oklahoma and William Roth of Delaware. A course that will be pursued in any event is to win the support of former president Gerald Ford and former secretary of state Henry Kissinger. They will demand assurances of increases in US military effort in return for their support, but they are expected to give it eventually. After all, the SALT II agreement sets lower ceilings on US and Soviet missile arsenals than Ford and Kissinger agreed to at Vladivostok in November 1974, and the Carter administration managed to win some major concessions from the Soviet Union that the previous administration did not, notably limits on the number of warheads carried by Soviet heavy missiles.

Besides the problem of winning Republican support, the administration will have to deal carefully with a batch of amendments that will be offered to the treaty. These will fall into three categories: those designed to win press notices and prestige for their author, those made in good faith efforts to improve the US strategic posture, and those designed to kill the SALT treaty. Some may fall into more than one category. The administration is making the case that any change in the body of the SALT treaty will kill it. After seven years of negotiations, administration officials argue, the Soviets will not reopen talks once SALT has been signed. Administration officials are also prepared to show senators how every proposed amendment was the subject of a US proposal during the SALT negotiations, and why it was not possible for the US to win Soviet acceptance for it. In many cases, the kind of US advantages to be proposed in amendments were traded off against Soviet demands for advantage. The administration will make the case that the trade usually was in the United States's favor, and that Senate changes would cause the Soviets—were they willing to reopen talks—to reverse their past concessions.

A key case in point is an amendment to allow the United States to achieve equality with the Soviet Union in payload of missiles, as opposed to numbers of missiles as provided in the draft treaty. There are variations on the theme. Some amendments seek to eliminate some or all of the Soviets' 308 heavy missiles, or give the US the option of deploying such missiles, of which we now have none. SALT critics contend that the Soviet advantage in size and weight of missiles means they will be able to fire enough warheads to destroy the whole US land-based rocket force in a surprise first strike. The principle of equality seems so

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attractive and fair that senators naturally might be drawn to support such an amendment, although the administration expects that the Soviet Union surely would balk at it. Indeed, SALT supporters call this a "killer amendment," specifically concocted to defeat SALT.

To counter it, the administration is prepared to show that a trade was made—actually made by Ford and Kissinger—permitting the Soviets to keep their heavy missiles while the Soviets dropped demands for the US to count its Europe-based missiles and airplanes as part of SALT. The Carter administration made a new stab at getting the Soviets to dismantle their heavy missiles when it presented its "deep cuts" SALT proposal in March 1977, which the Soviets flatly rejected. And, the administration says, limits on the number of warheads each missile can carry will accomplish similar or better results. Carter also is expected to make a decision shortly on how to protect the US land-based missile force from Soviet attack. The likeliest possibility seems to be mounting the missiles on railway cars capable of moving along trenches from one launch site to another so that the Soviets will not know where to aim.

Other "killer" amendments would require counting Soviet Backfire intermediate-range bombers as strategic weapons within the SALT ceilings and require the Soviets to allow on-site inspections in the Soviet Union to verify SALT. The administration contends the Soviets already have agreed to limits on Backfire production and basing to insure it will not be used against the United States, and that the US has fully adequate means to verify SALT without entering Soviet territory.

While it will try to beat down substantive amendments to SALT, the administration is willing to accept reservations which will allow senators to place a mark on US strategic preparedness. Almost surely, it will accept the reservation of Senator Gary Hart that SALT's three-year protocol limiting cruise missile testing cannot be extended without Senate approval. It might also agree to a resolution establishing that equality of payloads will be a goal of negotiations in SALT III. Another proposal is that the Soviet side-agreement on Backfire basing and production be made legally binding.

The administration also is willing to take unilateral steps to reassure senators about US ability to maintain strategic parity with the Soviets. To satisfy such key senators as Sam Nunn of Georgia and John Stennis of Mississippi, President Carter is expected to approve advanced development of the MX, a 10-warhead land-based missile, and its basing in a mobile mode to insure invulnerability from Soviet attack. Eliminating all US land-based missiles and substituting submarine-based ones would be a wiser course, but it would be politically disastrous in the Senate. Not only does the Air Force oppose it, but somehow it offends the manhood of senators for the US to be forced by Soviet power to remove its missiles from the land and hide them underwater. It seems to strike them as a retrenchment from humanity to an amphibious state of evolution. The design of some US planners in building MX is to gain a US first-strike advantage over the Soviets in the 1990s and force them to creep into the sea first.

Expensive and potentially provocative weapons-building promises made to hawks are offending Senate doves and economizers such as Geoge McGovern, Mark Hatfield and William Proxmire. The administration's final sticky problem is to keep this group from bolting into opposition. As President Carter did in a small session for senators last Tuesday night which included Hatfield, the administration is expected to argue that adoption of SALT, even if it means building MX and other new weapons, will achieve more arms control than rejection of the treaty would achieve. A defeat, according to the administration, will bring about a surge in arms production on each side, and will prevent the US and the Soviet Union from being sure what the other side has, thereby increasing international instability. The adminstration is banking that doves will be no more eager to bear the political and moral burdens of SALT defeat than hawks are.

Morton Kondracke

A new rallying cry
for the labor movement.

Runaway Plants

The day after President Carter's well-publicized visit to Clinton, Massachusetts in March 1977, Colonial Press—the town's biggest employer—announced the closing of its printing and binding factory. At its height, Colonial had employed 1750 people, but after mergers which placed the company into the hands of first one, then another conglomerate, the work force was pared to 800. Sheller-Globe, a Toledo-based automobile parts firm, had obtained Colonial almost by mistake; it happened to be one of the subsidiaries of the Victorine Corporation acquired by Sheller-Globe. With neither the interest nor the expertise to maintain the high quality work for which Colonial was known, the corporation finally decided to shift its investment elsewhere. After refusing to sell the factory to Clinton workers, the owners auctioned off the plant machinery and shut down.

The story of Colonial Press illustrates one facet of a twin economic phenomenon known as the "runaway corporation" and the "runaway plant." Some businesses, like Sheller-Globe, close subsidiaries in

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order to free capital for investment elsewhere. Others transfer entire industrial operations from one state to another (or from the US to a foreign country) in search of a more profitable business climate. In either case, the result is economic dislocation for the workers and communities left behind.

Runaway businesses are a growing issue on the left. United Auto Workers president Douglas Fraser said recently, "moving a plant without regard to the people laid off or the communities affected is unacceptable social conduct in a democracy and should be ended." Labor unions and public interest organizations are beginning to focus attention on the social costs that runaways leave in their wake. In states throughout the north central and northeast regions, citizens' groups have proposed legislation to put a tether on the runaways. The complex problems of economic dislocation present a promising opportunity to a labor movement desperately in need of new ideas and new political vision.

The conceptual problem is determining which plant closings are inevitable or justified and which ones constitute truly antisocial behavior. Such distinctions are not always easy to establish. International competition forces the rationalization of work and the search for lower labor costs. The cancellation of a government defense contract or new environmental regulations can contribute to the closing of certain plants. Sometimes simple obsolescence does a factory in. Statistics on plant closings are scarce (the federal government doesn't keep any), and those that do exist are notoriously uninformative.

Whatever the cause, economic dislocation has become very serious in some parts of the country. While manufacturing employment in the United States dropped by three percent between 1967 and 1976, the decrease in the northeast and north central regions was 13 percent, representing nearly 1.5 million jobs. Plant relocations alone accounted for the loss of 30,000 jobs in Michigan between 1970 and 1974. Of the 1.5 million manufacturing jobs in Ohio in 1969, over 150,000 have been lost in the past 10 years.

The growing movement of investment capital abroad (from five percent of total invested capital in 1950 to nearly 10 percent in 1972) has severely contracted the domestic job market. Cornell economists Robert Frank and Richard Freeman place the net job loss between 1966 and 1973 at 1.06 million, with 735,000 in manufacturing alone. This trend also affects the jobs that remain behind. The fewer jobs to go around, the stiffer the competition among regions of the country for them. Investment moves to areas offering the best combination of low wages, docile unions and tax subsidies. Regions of the country compete to supply these things.

This high mobility of capital is primarily a function of its concentration. The growth of national and multinational conglomerates has exacerbated economic dislocation. Small family firms tend to be rooted in communities with ties to the local population and local financial institutions; subsidiaries of conglomerates have no such ties. As in the case of Colonial Press, absentee decision-makers are more apt to shift their operation far away. Corporations scout the countryside for healthy small businesses, ripe for take-over. But when conglomerates impose normal corporate mechanisms on these small plants—a higher profit rate and more rigid management systems—they suddenly become "unprofitable." After going on an acquisition binge in New England in the 1960s, one conglomerate required a 25 percent pre-tax rate of return on investment from its subsidiaries in an industry where the average profit rate was only eight percent. Subsequent closings accounted for about 4000 lost jobs. "There are a lot of anecdotal cases," said Bennett Harrison, an MIT economist who heads a Harvard-MIT research project on corporate acquisition. "We're trying to see how generalized it is."

The corporate world believes the fuss over runaways is a false issue. The American Enterprise Institute has a new pamphlet called "Restrictions on Business Mobility." Its author, Clemson University economist Richard McKenzie, claims that any effort to regulate runaways is "a solution to a nonexistent problem." The cornerstone of McKenzie's argument is data compiled by two MIT professors comparing rates of industrial growth and decline in the "northern industrial tier" and the "sunbelt." Using Dun and Bradstreet code numbers which identify firms by location from year to year, they concluded that a mere 1.5 percent of employment losses in the north were due to the "out-migration" of businesses or runaway plants. But the Dun and Bradstreet coding system drastically understates relocations. Often a move from one state to another is accompanied by a change in the legal name of a firm. The disappearance of the old code number is registered as a closing rather than "out-migration." Moreover, the data McKenzie uses cover only four years, 1969-72. Most relocations result from a phased closing of old plants and phased expansion of new ones. Therefore employment patterns he explains by "contraction of firms" in the north (44.7 percent) and "expansion of firms" in the south (64.3 percent) probably conceal many "runaways in progress." Finally, the Dun and Bradstreet system only considers domestic movement of business. The effects of relocation abroad go wholly unrecorded.

McKenzie's theoretical approach underestimates the problem of dislocation because he only considers the actual physical relocation of a plant. In this framework, firms like Colonial Press—victims of runaway corporate capital—are written off as business failures. The real issue is not so much business mobility as capital mobility.

For McKenzie and other corporate spokesmen, the

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migration of capital is a natural by-product of market forces. Their buzz-word is the "dynamic" economy whose invisible hand produces an ever new and more efficient equilibrium with free choice and lower prices for all. This free-market idyll neglects a central issue in the runaway debate: government subsidies to relocating businesses. The federal government and the states actually encourage runaways. Runaway plants are eligible for the same federal tax incentives as any brand new industrial operation; but in the case of runaways no new jobs are added to the economy. Say corporation A wants to move its ball bearing factory from Michigan to Alabama. Besides the obvious advantages to the corporation of a new plant, lower wages, and most likely a non-unionized work force, the tax code provides many inducements. Operating losses incurred as the old plant is phased out can be written off against profits elsewhere. Meanwhile, all that brand new equipment purchased for the new plant receives an investment tax credit and is eligible for accelerated depreciation. Tax programs that ostensibly encourage good things like corporate investment and job creation end up contributing to economic dislocation as well.

Federal tax breaks even subsidize businesses that move abroad. Multinationals take deductions to relocate in a foreign country, pay no US taxes as long as their profits remain abroad, then take another deduction (foreign tax credits) when these profits are repatriated. Special tariff regulations encourage American companies to export certain stages of production of goods meant for the American market.

Competition between the states forces them to give tax breaks to runaways too. Most evidence suggests that these breaks are self-defeating. Ohio has sliced its corporate taxes to the bone but the jobs keep leaving. The only real accomplishment has been to create a climate of fear among workers and communities, as businesses use the threat of relocation to get new breaks or silence collective bargaining demands.

In some states, however, a movement is taking shape to address the multiple problems that runaways create. It has drawn wide support from labor unions and community groups. Legislation to discourage unnecessary plant closings is either before state houses or on the drawing board in Ohio, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Michigan and five other states.

The Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC) has written a "runaway plants bill" which has become the model for most of these initiatives. It has three essential provisions: advance notification at least two years before any closing of a factory employing over 100 people (an "economic impact statement" detailing the effects of the closing on employment must be submitted within 90 days of the announcement); severance pay to each laid-off worker equaling one week of full salary for every year at the firm; and the payment into a "Community Assistance Fund" of a sum equal to 10 percent of the total annual wages of all employees who lose their jobs. The state government would administer the fund to combat the effects of dislocation.

The purpose of runaway plants bills is not to deny corporations the freedom to move their operations. Rather, the point is to make corporations bear the genuine social cost of their relocations and—more important—factor these costs into their calculations when deciding whether to move or close a factory. Right now, the cost of runaway plants is paid entirely by the people who are left behind. Besides losing their jobs, workers often lose pension and health benefits precisely when they need them the most. And communities are trapped between a shrinking tax base and increased social welfare payments to the newly unemployed. Most serious are the social costs that accompany factory closings: urban blight, social disruption, and the under-utilization of local resources.

The corporate opposition has consistently misrepresented the proposed laws as a concerted attack on the prerogatives of investors. The Ohio Manufacturers Association has branded the OPIC legislation the "Industrial Ransom Bill." And there is even a dark hint at the gulag in the *Wall Street Journal*'s overblown comparison between the bill and the "education tax" levied on emigrating Soviet Jews.

Most of the fireworks have occurred on the local level, but it is clear that any effort to move beyond defensive measures to the actual control of dislocation must be national in scope. A state-by-state approach puts those states which pass a runaway plants bill at a disadvantage in the competition with their neighbors. To avoid this would require federal legislation more comprehensive in scope and universal in application.

Certain unions are trying to make economic dislocation a national issue. Last summer, representatives from the UAW, Machinists and Steelworkers visited Britain, West Germany and Sweden, all of which have laws for managing dislocation. In each of these countries, workers are protected from the effects of dislocation by transfer benefits and retraining programs. In addition public institutions actually direct investment to minimize unemployment in depressed regions and industries. The Swedish Labor Market Board, composed of representatives from business, labor and government, directs a special tax-free fund of "investment reserves" for job creation in those areas that need it the most. American unionists point out that European societies—and the American subsidiaries that have been profitably investing in them—have been living with dislocation controls for years. They argue that such public institutions are best suited for planning the necessary restructuring of traditional American industries such as steel and textiles.

The federal equivalent to the OPIC bill is the National Employment Priorities Act, first introduced by Michigan congressman William Ford in 1974. It has the usual provisions for advance notice and transfer

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benefits. It still does not prevent any particular relocation, but it does address the issue of investment decisions in a way the state proposals do not. A "National Employment Relocation Administration" in the Labor Department would determine the "economic justification" of disputed closings and could cut off tax benefits to businesses found to have arbitrarily closed their operations. Economic justification is a crucial concept; unfortunately the Ford bill leaves it wholly undefined. To identify precisely what economic justification means would be to engage the real issue behind the entire runaway debate: the degree to which the general concerns of a public community can impinge on the particular activity and decisions of private corporations.

Even its supporters concede that the Ford bill has no chance of passing soon. But this need not mean that the movement to curb the runaways will collapse before it gets off the ground. The Ford bill and its state cousins may be most important as a vehicle for labor's rethinking of its role in American politics. Already some labor leaders see economic dislocation as a tangle of problems touching economic planning, international trade policy, defense spending, tax law, and environmental and health and safety regulation. "There are no real remedies until we're prepared to take on two fundamental tenets of the economic system," said Dick Greenwood, aide to Machinist president William Winpisinger, "management's investment prerogatives and proprietary rights to information."

Such language is certainly not designed to win congressional votes. But given labor's disarray, a more immediate task may be defining those new directions that promise to revitalize the unions as a political force. The costs of economic dislocation will continue to be borne unequally by workers and their communities unless American unions move toward a more aggressive political unionism on the Western European model. But before selling that to the lawmakers, it will have to be sold in places like Clinton, Massachusetts.

Robert Howard

Robert Howard is a Washington writer.

History repeats itself at *Esquire*.

What Every Man Needs to Know

by Harold Hayes

Society is changing its definition of manhood at too rapid a rate, leaving the man in the middle.

Esquire understands this.

And it intends to help with the problem, in an important meaningful way.

Because in the midst of all this unsettling change, a man is still expected to know what wrench to use, what to wear for each occasion, what wine to order, how to make important decisions about his life, how to entertain a woman, where to vacation, and how to buy a stereo system that sounds like a concert hall. . . .

—From "Why We Bought *Esquire*," a full-page ad in the Business Day supplement of the *New York Times*.

'We grew up on *Esquire*," say its new young owners, Phillip Moffitt, age 32, and H. Christopher Whittle, age 31, in their ad. So did I. When I was nine, my father, a Baptist minister, wouldn't let it in the house and I sneaked looks at it next door. When *they* were nine, I went to work there. This was about eight months before Ralph Ginzburg and Clay Felker were hired. Ginzburg came over from *Look*, where he had acquired some expertise in newsstand promotion. Felker came from *Life*, where it was rumored he had run into trouble by scrambling the identifying captions on pictures of Notre Dame football players, some of whom lacked their front teeth.

Ginzburg wore tweed suits, bow ties and cordovan shoes. He kept an army canteen filled with water on his desk at all times. He had a forced loud laugh which in the absence of other office sounds was disagreeable. Felker was a smoother number but hot-tempered and blunt. None of us like the other two very much but this was mainly, it is now clear, because the editor's job was open, and each of us wanted it badly.

Esquire always has been in trouble of some kind—and it was in trouble when we arrived, this time from the embarrassing success of a fleshier version of itself.

Harold Hayes was editor of *Esquire* from 1963 through 1973.

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Where the postmaster general and the cardinal had failed, Hefner's *Playboy* had forced *Esquire* to reposition itself in the ad markets by cleaning up. *Esquire* was now to be a "leisure" magazine. Nevertheless, and despite the efforts of founder Arnold Gingrich, who had returned three years earlier to help save it, the rate of decline held steady. We three were the infusion, red hot corpuscles sent to the rescue the body *chic*. Soon driven witless by the competition imposed upon us, each of us strove to find some operating principles that would assure the magazine's survival and thereby rid him forever of the other two. Safely but lamely—I wasn't sure what would work but I wasn't about to say so—I argued for ideas: let ideas shape the content. Ginzburg favored the shot-to-the-kidney cover line ("Careless Love Can Kill You"). Felker argued for service: "The future of all magazines," he said often, fervently and with total conviction, "is *service*."

Magazines of service are so plentiful today, and so successful, that the word has bloated beyond recognition. In the past year's awards, the American Society of Magazine Editors included as a category "service to the individual." The finalists consisted of a comprehensive guide on hi-fi equipment, a survey of organic food, an article on the salutary effect of laughter on the immunological system, a series on garden vegetables, and a home-study course for nurses in the treatment of diabetics. Only the word "service" held the contenders in the same stadium.

Service—a service magazine, a service magazine feature—is supposed to leave the reader in an improved position, brighter, wiser, better informed on how to chart his way across the troubled seas of life—e.g., which wrench to use. God knows where the inspiration first came from. Horace Greeley? Social Darwinism? For most editors it is the *intent* that is confusing: service to whom? Ralph Nader's periodic reporting on consumer rip-offs is service. So was Woodward's and Bernstein's reporting on Nixon. An article on selecting wrenches might serve your occasional wrench shopper, but to help him in the choice is not inherently the editor's job, or necessarily part of the editor's required skills. Indeed there is not an editor I know now, or ever have known, who could help me find the right wrench or even knew where to find it for himself.

As the declared intentions of Moffitt and Whittle leave little doubt about their interpretation of the words, it is worth noting that the *Esquire* of the late 1950s would seem in retrospect to be exactly what they have in mind. As imposed from above, the service "budget" called for eight pages of men's wear, four of travel, two of liquor, and an expandable "Talking Shop" section. "But that's just for *starters*!" as the promotion director used to say at regular luncheons for prospective advertisers. "Special sections! Boats in February, hi-fi in February *and* November, business in March, golf in April, cars in June, Pacific travel in August, back-to-school in September. . . ." *Esquire* was a portable flea market. Then and for several years thereafter, it should also be noted, *Esquire* continued to go to hell in a bucket.

Sometimes, although rarely, the decline of a magazine can be arrested. *Cosmopolitan* (who can remember that it once published excellent fiction?) is a living example, delivered from insolvency by the inspired perception of Helen Gurley Brown that a woman without a man is a dollar looking for a pocket. So striking was her success—so logical to the front office—it is difficult now to argue that there is any other solution. Service is the logic of the ledger. Ledger logic orders the convening of readers by the editors to shop the wares advertised by manufacturers. Since most magazines arise today from such a premise, and since the magazine business is booming again (up 11 percent in revenues for March 1979 over March 1978), ledger logic prevails even when it brings disaster.

But in fact, *Esquire* magazine was saved in the 1960s by its constituency of writers. In our best moments those of us who worked there clung to the faith that a writer's consciousness, in whatever direction it is beamed, is the only thing truly interesting about a magazine. "But what's your game plan?" magazine brokers and market strategists always ask. "What's your market?" The answer now seems even odder than it did then: just divvy up the space you have among the best writers you can find and give them interesting things to write about. There were gewgaws and gimcrackery, too, some humor and fun stuff, even service. But the base line of *Esquire* in the 1960s was that it was a writer's magazine. And what riches we had! We brought back old ones (Dorothy Parker, John Steinbeck, Dwight Macdonald), enticed contemporary ones (Vidal, Styron, Richardson, Baldwin, Mailer) and found some new ones (Talese, Wolf, Wakefield, Wills, Sack, Herr). Nobody enjoyed reading it more than we did. And by God, by 1967 the money was rolling in.

Ginzburg left *Esquire* in 1958; Felker in 1962. Time and separation eroded the ire each of us had nursed toward the other two, turned it, as time will sometimes do, into hard-burned respect. Each convinced at our first meeting the other two should be locked away (an accommodation eventually to be visited upon Ginzburg by the Supreme Court for worse reasons than ours), we didn't pause at parting to say good-bye. But I later called Ralph's wife, while he was in jail, to see if he would write us a circulation promotion; and much later, Felker and I tried without success to get together a political weekly to cover the unfolding Watergate trials.

Both men advanced according to their talents. In one of his recent promotion ads, Ginzburg says he has made his million. I believe him. The founder and publisher of *Eros, Avant Garde, Moneysworth* and others, he has raised the conventions of circulation promotion to Einsteinian levels of curved space. The *Times* reported recently that he now sells off the names of his subscribers to other publications, to be used for *their* subscription

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promotions, for more money than he makes from his own magazines.

As for Felker, he has won two, lost two—founded his own New York company and lost it to Rupert Murdoch several years ago, and bought the old *Esquire* in 1977 to lose it last month to Moffitt and Whittle. "In the end," he told *Time* magazine, summing up, "I will do something in journalism. I am a journalist." I believe him, too. The service Felker had in mind from the first was not the service offered by, say, *Vogue*, which is that of a catalogue. His had a journalistic edge to it. The objective was to produce features that would move the reader uptown, to the high rent district where smart people belong. The trick in achieving this was not to dump a lot of expensive garbage into the pages, but to show the reader how much better things were where he was not.

The obsessions of an editor, as with Brown's empathy for frustrated singles, soon define a magazine's personality. Felker is obsessed with power and style. Power and style are not evoked by back-lit photographs of merchandise; they are a state of mind. And they are highly susceptible to desire. You deal with them *journalistically*, as you would with politics or any other important institutions.

In the 1960s, with his new magazine *New York*, and later with *New West*, Felker was free to do his stuff. From the psyche of Pat Nixon to the "Best Bet" in suede shoe tongues, Felker offered his services, drawing about him the most intensely acquisitive readers from the two most impatiently ambitious upwardly-mobile communities in the country, New York City and Los Angeles. Power joined to style forms trends, and Felker was good at this, too. Tom Wolf's "Radical Chic" and "The Me Decade," while implicitly mocking the magazine carrying them, ran in *New York*. The first issue of *Ms.* was "piggy-backed" inside *New York*, offering his out-front readers a unique preview of what has since become yet another service phenomenon.

In the toughest quarters of town, where ledger logic ruled, Felker's service was soon seen to be a quantum leap beyond conventional service. Helen Gurley Brown was Tiffany lamps and white wine with the fish; Felker was Hi-Tech, and take-overs with the brandy. Felker's readers didn't want just another new object to replace the one wearing out; they wanted to chuck it all and take a place in *New York* magazine's state of mind. This was quite an accomplishment. And by God, the money poured in there, too.

Soon enough, hardly a major city in the country was without its own version of *New York*. All that was needed for *Los Angeles* magazine to take off was for Felker to announce his intention to buy it. The fever spread to newspapers. All those readers out there, needing help with their lifestyles, were simply being ignored—a forgotten multitude. Help arrived by the carload of newsprint, and special sections flourished—Home, Leisure, Lifestyle, Food, Health, etc. Already enjoying a virtual monopoly in most towns, newspaper publishers had suddenly discovered gushers in their own backyard. All you had to do was put together a special section on "Living"—five or six food articles, a few recipes, household hints—and what supermarket could afford to stay out?

Felker's state of mind led straight to the land of plenty. Although he was duly recognized as the visionary—Murdoch buying him out should be evidence enough, but the editor of the *New York Times* said so, too—Felker doubtless would see this too-quick consolidation of his principles as the vulgarization of an ideal. Nevertheless, more than anyone else, Clay Felker is responsible. It is doubtful that any magazine concept, including Luce's news magazine and picture journalism, has so profoundly affected American journalism, however deleterious in the long run it may prove to be. The man is indeed a journalist.

But is he to blame? Not really. No more than the mechanic who makes a better wrench is liable for a drunken plumber. Service journalism is a tool. Its consequences depend on how you use it. Instructional help for nurses in the treatment of diabetics is an important service. (It won the ASME category.) Cooking recipes for housewives are helpful and harmless. Who would begrudge the sale of advertising space to support the publication offering these things?

The worst that can happen is that a publication sells off its credibility to its advertisers. Not as bad, but bad enough, is the erosion of intent into mindless irrelevancy, e.g., The Daily Wrench Guide to Shoppingmart Town, State of Mind, USA. A danger invisible to the reader, but surely the most insidious, is the loss of editorial space available for anything else—for writers, for example, who have interesting things to say. As we discovered in the late 1950s, *Esquire* had become more a marketplace than a magazine.

Clay Felker struggled honorably to preserve the better qualities of the *Esquire* magazine he published against an alien market climate he had himself helped to form. "The future of magazines is service"—he was right the first time, and *Esquire* just isn't much of a service magazine, and never was. Felker seemed finally to realize this during the year and a half he owned it. He threw out the satin sheet and rubber suit advertising, and the cut-rate circulation, trimmed it down and worked hard at making it interesting. There was service—"The Right Stuff," as he called his gift section—but not too much, and not at the expense of editorial content. Finding the right writers to make things interesting takes time, however; and after a reported loss to his backers of five million dollars, Felker's time ran out. How cruel for him—for all of us who treasure it—to read in the newly expanded business service section of the *New York Times* the advertisement purchased by Moffitt and Whittle telling us why they bought it.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

The Hunting of the Hunters

The furor over *The Deer Hunter* is international, heightened by its Academy Awards. "Racist," "a criminal violation of the truth," "a continuation of [the Vietnam] war by other, and more profitable, means"—these are some of the comments. In London the *New Statesman* ran an article called "Why The Deer Hunter Is a Lie" and illustrated it with juxtaposed photographs: a napalmed Vietnamese child and a publicity shot of the film's principal actors, smiling. (The *New York Times* subsequently published an adaptation of that article on its Op-Ed page.) In Berlin this spring the Soviet Union and its satellites withdrew from the Film Festival there because *The Deer Hunter* had been included. Aside from the Soviet-bloc action—how can it be anything but gruesomely funny to see them protesting alleged dishonest propaganda?—the controversy, which continues, is important and worth examining.

I begin with myself because, in candor, I was surprised by the reaction to the film in some quarters, and my surprise is connected to my argument. Early in the 1960s I joined the protests against US involvement in Vietnam, kept protesting as that involvement grew, and kept on after the withdrawal of US troops while money and supplies continued to flow to Vietnam. I mention my actions, which were no more than what thousands of others did, only to "place" myself on the subject. And to me, the torture sequence in *The Deer Hunter*—the Viet Cong forcing their US prisoners to play Russian roulette—did not seem intrinsically incredible: because neither I nor anyone I knew objected to the Vietnam War on the ground that the North was angelic. We knew fairly early of the tortures and murders done by South Vietnamese and US forces, but we also knew of tortures and murders done by the North Vietnamese. The issue for us was US intervention—its effects there and at home—not the moral superiority of North over South Vietnam. Thus when I saw this 15-to-20 minute torture sequence in the middle of this three-hour film, I took it as given. I had no knowledge as to whether the Russian-roulette routine had ever actually been practiced (and much has since been made by ex-correspondents of the fact that they never heard of it there), but I accepted it as symbolic, for two reasons.

First, the Viet Cong were quite capable of barbarism and the killing of prisoners. Does anyone doubt that? Second, the sequence fits the film, thematically and metaphorically. *The Deer Hunter* is *not* about Vietnam: it's about three steelworkers, bonded in maleness, who work and drink and hunt together, who enlist together as paratroopers, who are captured and tortured together, who escape together, and who then—which is usually omitted in comment—move on to the longest part of their story, the differing resolutions of that experience with their futures. They do not see the war as other, embittered, horrified or numbed soldiers saw it, or as I saw it, or, for that matter, as Jane Fonda saw it: they see *their* war. The Russian roulette was the obvious extension of the "one shot" credo by which these former hunters had lived; enlistment in war and survival of torture were the testings *in extremis* of their maleness. I was so convinced of this—and still am, after seeing the film again—that I suggested the alternative ironic title Games People Play.

So I was surprised that some intelligent people—I disregard the loudmouthed opportunists—have seen the film otherwise. The Vietnam experience, in all its ramifications, was a wound from which this country may never recover, worse in some ways than either of the World Wars; perceptive people are understandably sensitive about it. Still their reaction here seems odd: the objection seems to be not so much that the VC are shown as vicious but that the ARVN and US forces are not *also* shown as vicious, maybe more so. This seems to me an inhibiting, almost juvenile critical equation: if we show bad actions by people with whom we sympathize, we must at least balance them with bad actions by people with whom we don't sympathize. Did these critics also object to *Slaughterhouse-Five*, novel and film, because it showed the Allied fire-bombing of Dresden but did not show the German bombing of Coventry? (The *New Statesman* article, mentioned earlier, detailed the indisputable sufferings of the North Vietnamese, with very little comment on the film itself, as if the omission of those sufferings self-evidently discredited the film.)

Philip French, the film critic of the (London) *Observer*, wrote the most succinct and just comment on *The Deer Hunter* that I have seen (March 4, 1979). He noted the title's link with Fenimore Cooper and the relation in themes and situations with some Hemingway stories, then said:

> *The picture is about that perennial American preoccupation . . . with male friendship, seen as a finer and stronger thing than love between men and women. And it's about the other side of that coin, loneliness, the brooding cosmic solitude Americans have felt ever since they confronted the overpowering vastness of their continent. . . .* The Deer Hunter *deals with an ethnic community largely untouched by the great social currents of the 1960s and is constructed quite deliberately to eliminate discussion of war-aims and the larger issues involved in the Vietnam conflict. This is a grave weakness (some will think it an*

Films Worth Seeing

The China Syndrome. Simplifies nuclear energy problems by painting power executives as murderous heavies, still a sizzling thriller.

Norma Rae. Sally Field is splendid in this very moving film about labor problems in the Deep South today. The whole film, if slightly naive, is engrossing and important.

Richard Pryor, Live in Concert. An hour and 20 minutes of fun, all of it raunchy, some of it socially slashing.

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invalidating one), but it is also what enables Cimino [the director] to attain something approaching the tragic grandeur of a popular epic.

(French was then subjected—in the *New Statesman* again—to a vile versified attack based on one line slyly extracted from his review.)

For myself, I don't agree with one point, that it was arbitrarily a weakness to eliminate discussion of the larger issues and was therefore a mistake to concentrate on *machismo*. Further, the statement, by some others, that Cimino and colleagues chose their subject as a way to "win" the war retroactively is weak twice over. It carries the Intentional Fallacy to new depths: how can these people know what was in the minds of the filmmakers? And it indicts the filmmakers, not for villainy but for economic and artistic lunacy: it says that they made the other two hours and 40 minutes of the film only to enclose their 20 minutes of "messsage."

I submit that, if we are going to be moved to thought and action by *The Deer Hunter*, it ought to be by the implications of its true subject: the limitations for our society of the traditions of male mystique, the hobbling by sentimentality of a community that, after all the horror, still wants the beeriness of "God Bless America" instead of a moral rigor and growth that might help this country.

None of the above is to say the *The Deer Hunter* is a first-class film, as such. It is not. Although the direction is generally good and the acting is always fine, the script flounders increasingly as it goes on, particularly in the third and longest section. The extraordinary acting is what holds the film together when the script straggles. Still, it ought to be slated for its real faults, not for adduced ones. Anyway, with further irony, *The Deer Hunter* is a much better piece of work, in artistic wholeness and thematic cogency, than *Coming Home*, that flabby and compromised picture on the Vietnam War made by people whose political views are, apparently, close to my own.

But the sharpest irony of all this outcry against *The Deer Hunter* is that it has further obscured the best film so far made about Vietnam. *Go Tell the Spartans* (*TNR*, June 24, 1978) is *really* about the Vietnam War, in 1964; and, beneath some stock war-movie ingredients, it deals ruthlessly with the making of the quagmire. Instead of lambasting *The Deer Hunter* for supposedly doing something outside its subject, instead of praising *Coming Home* for what it fiddled with, it would be a lot more to the point to pay some attention to *Go Tell the Spartans*, which virtually no one has seen.

Francine du Plessix Gray

Thomas Merton: Man and Monk

In the 6th century AD, St. Benedict of Nursia set forth the three monastic vows binding on all men who wished to devote themselves to a life of contemplation under his rule: "In the presence of all, he shall promise stability, conversion of life and obedience." The vows remain unchanged to this day in the Benedictine Rule and its several offshoots, one of which is the Trappist Order. The American writer Thomas Merton pledged himself to them "before God and all His saints" when he entered the Trappist monastery of Gethsemane, Kentucky, in December of 1941.

From St. Benedict to our time, metaphors justifying the primary promise of "stability" have been drawn from botany: the dangers of transplantation to all seeds and plants, the monk's need to be perfectly and permanently rooted to bear fine spiritual fruit. Stability, perhaps more poignantly than any other vow, expresses the dynamism of renunciation which is at the heart of Christian monasticism. Yet in our nomadic, touristic century it seems even more arduous and anachronistic than "obedience," or the oaths of poverty and chastity dictated by "conversion of life." It binds the monk to live within the geographic bounds of his monastery until his death, only traveling beyond them with the permission of his abbot as a great exception. It asks him to renounce all thought of seeking a greater good (even a greater spiritual good) in another community.

So there was an awesome, primitive fatality about the front page obituary which reported Thomas Merton's death on December 11, 1969. He had died during a trip to the Far East, his first true venture beyond the routine of monastic life in his 27 years as a Trappist monk. A transgression of stability exceptionally granted to the most famous monastic in the United States, it was a trip which he had desired for over a decade. And even the circumstances of his death, which occurred in Bangkok, Thailand, had elements of primal, lightning-like retribution: Thomas Merton died of accidental electrocution. He had apparently touched a live wire of the faulty electric fan that stood by his bedside. He was found a few hours later on the floor of his hotel room, his heart stopped, his chest deeply charred by the burning wires.

Fifty-three years old, the author of some 40 volumes of poetry and prose, the most skillful interpreter of Zen Buddhism in the West, our most eloquent theorist of non-violence, he was hailed even in Europe as one of the most prophetic Catholic writers of our time. "His face was set in a great and deep peace," so goes the official report of his death, "and it was obvious that he had found Him whom he had searched for so diligently." There is a traditional pietism in these words which might have made Merton uncomfortable. For this complex man's total reverence for the Ground of Being was matched by an equally profound need to be acerbically irreverent about himself. And his self-deprecations are often couched in wry, Chaplinesque shorthand. "Say that Merton is dead and never existed," he wrote to a friend when he was trying to sever himself from the fame of his *Seven Storey Mountain*. "Bogus Trappist exposed. Gold trousers under the cowl. Merton wears a necktie. False priest caught giving candy to widows."

Merton never lost, in his private correspondence, the Augustinian rowdiness that had marked his youth. His classmates at Columbia seem unanimous on the subject: energetic fraternity man, lusty drinker and raconteur, leader of a moderately hearty sex life, editor of college yearbook and art editor of the *Columbia Jester* (to which he contributed many gifted drawings of bawdy nudes), he cloaked the scars of his uprooted, orphaned childhood with an abundance of high spirits. He had come into the junior class of Columbia after two years at Oxford, was befriended by such peers and teachers as Ad

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Reinhardt, Robert Lax, Robert Giroux, Mark Van Doren, stayed on to do a Master's thesis on William Blake. Brought up a tepid Anglican, he was converted to the Catholic faith after a brief flirtation with communism. A year later he chose to become a truly practicing Communist by taking vows in the most rigid monastic rule to be found in the United States—a progeny of Benedictism called "Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance," commonly known as Trappists after their 17th-century founder, the Abbot of La Trappe.

BOOKS DISCUSSED IN THIS ESSAY:

Thomas Merton: Monk and Poet
by George Woodcock
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $7.95)

Thomas Merton: Prophet in the Belly of a Paradox
edited by Gerald Twomey
(Paulist Press; $9.95)

Love and Living
by Thomas Merton
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $10)

A Catch of Anti-Letters
by Thomas Merton and Robert Lax
(Sheed Andrews & McMeel; $8.95)

It was within the cloister, ironically, that the paradoxes of Merton's life began to proliferate: the man who had sought fidelity to the Gospel by becoming "A worm and No one" (St. Benedict's seventh degree of humility) was catapulted to national fame by the account of his journey toward self-abnegation. *Seven Storey Mountain* testified to the pietism of the 1940s by selling 400,000 copies in its first year of publication, reaching the top of the best-seller list, running third behind *The White Collar Zoo* and a book on canasta. Merton's literary fruitfulness—he averaged at least a book a year in the succeeding decades—is all the more startling in view of the rigors of the Cistercian life. With its traditional dedication to silence and to manual labor, the Trappist way combines the routine of hard-pressed peasant farmers with a majestically demanding liturgical schedule. The monks rose at 2 a.m., to sing the Divine Office and the Mass and chanted their Gregorian way, once a week, through all of the 150 Psalms. Father Louis (the name Merton took on after ordination) estimated that for the first 20 years of his life as a monastic he seldom had more than six or eight hours a week to write. The isolation of such a community before the liberal temper of the late 1950s allowed no secular periodicals into our monasteries! The man who eventually became the Church's most eloquent commentator on the perils of the nuclear age did not know that a bomb had fallen on Hiroshima until three months after the event.

One of the most singular traits of this complex, worldly mystic was his fidelty to traditional ideals of the monastic life. Merton never wavered from the conservative eschatological view that the monk plays a central role in perfecting the world by taking on Christ's suffering and self-sacrifice. He saw Gethsemane as "the center of America," a place which is "keeping the universe from cracking to pieces and falling apart." In the late 1950s, as he turned away from the sometimes self-righteous *fuga mundi* tone of his earliest writings, Merton added a crucial social dimension to his view of the monastic vocation which only deepened his commitment to it. He wrote that the monk can be the freest and most efficacious social critic in our society because of the "ultimate compassion" which he receives in contemplative solitude. By his very abnegation of fashionably fluctuating secular values, the monk can achieve "a radical liberation from the delusions and obsessions of modern society." And this liberation can enable him to identify with crucial areas of contemporary suffering—war, hunger, racial injustice—even more passionately than most laymen.

Thus the hackneyed opposition of "action versus contemplation," of Martha versus Mary, never exists in Merton's later work. The two are inextricably fused in his belief that the most solitary and deepest level of contemplation can bear the fruit of the deepest political concern. Rebutting fashionable current attacks on the "irrelevance" of monasticism in our century, he wryly dismissed the standards of "relevance" imposed on us by the secular world: "We suffer all the needs that society demands us to suffer because if we do not have these needs we lose our 'usefulness' in society—the usefulness of suckers."

The central problem which plagued the last decade of Merton's life was that he wished to be both more of a contemplative and more of an activist (albeit in word only) than his order would ever allow him to be. He was haunted by the desire to have a hermitage of his own on the grounds of Gethsemane, or to transgress his vow of stability by moving to a site even more solitary than the wooded silence of his monastery. He dreamed of Africa, of the Far East, of the California desert. It was a natural reaction to the fact that he was becoming a cult figure, even an object of pilgrimage, to a motley sector of Catholic and secular liberals. Joan Baez eventually came to visit, Eldridge Cleaver would read passages of his work at Black Panther meetings, Lenny Bruce often ended his night club act by reading, with a German accent, Merton's chilling meditation on Adolf Eichmann. Merton took increasingly long walks in the woods to escape the pilgrims. In 1962, after two decades of exemplary service as choralist, master of students, master of novices, teacher of theology, Merton finally gained permission to live alone in a hermitage on the grounds of Gethsemane. He was faithful to his notion that the most solitary contemplation can lead to the deepest social concern; for his long-awaited life as a hermit coincides with his period of greatest social outspokenness.

In 1964, Merton led a retreat at Gethsemane entitled "The Spiritual Roots of Protest." It was attended, among others, by the brothers Daniel and Philip Berrigan and by the Catholic activist James Forest. All three of them have testified that their eventual decision to engage in acts of civil disobedience—the draft file burnings of the Catonsville Nine and the Milwaukee Fourteen—can be traced in part to the retreat Merton led in the wooded isolation of his hermitage. It must be stressed that the poet-monk spawned much more than he had hoped at this particular gathering. It took him some years to be persuaded that the "destruction of property" later engaged in by the Berrigans and their associates did not border on violence. Nevertheless Merton's writings about racial justice and

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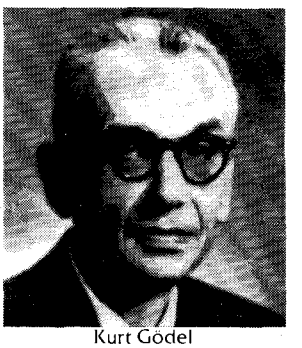

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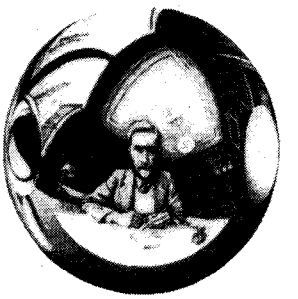

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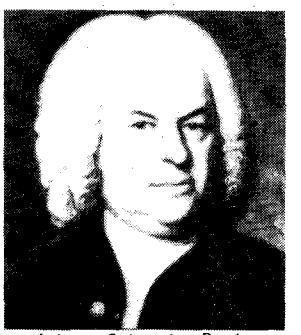

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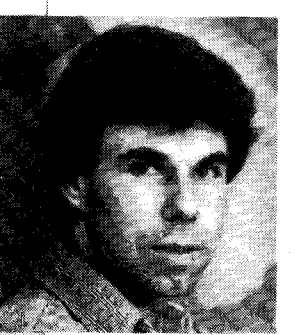

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government policy became so outspoken that the Cistercian censors decided to silence him on those issues for two full years. He writes in 1964 to his friend Daniel Berrigan:

> *Look, a lot of the monastic party line we're getting ends up by being pure, unadulterated—crap. . . . I have been told that I am destroying the image of the contemplative vocation when I write about peace. . . . In a word it is all right for the monk to break his ass putting out packages of cheese and making a pile of money for the old monastery, but as to doing anything that is really fruitful for the Church, that is another matter altogether. . . .*

The rest is social history at its most ironic: the waning of that "better dead than red" jingoism which had once characterized the American Catholic community had made it the most politically conservative sector of the nation; and its unexpected spawning of some of the 1960s' most radical gestures. As the most brilliant writer of that pacifist minority which gained the attention of an entire generation (a generation singularly starved for myth, ritual and general respiritualization), Merton is currently enjoying a renewed vogue. A five-day symposium was held at Columbia University last fall upon the 10th anniversary of his death; its proceedings will be published by the Paulist Press next fall. The definitive biography by John Howard Griffin has been long awaited. The books under review in this issue are merely a small prelude to the growing feast of Merton studies.

Poet, critic, essayist George Woodcock, author of *Thomas Merton: Monk and Poet* is one of Canada's most eminent men of letters. A lifelong pacifist and an astute student of the Orient, he is well equipped to deal with these two crucial areas of Merton's thought. He has produced a sturdy, meticulous critical biography that is the best single study to date of Merton's writings. Woodcock traces the evolution of Merton's pacifism to his lifelong involvement with racial justice and his admiration for Martin Luther King's non-violent tactics. He is equally thorough in limning Merton's later debt to Gandhi. Woodcock gives a brilliant reading of Merton's books on Eastern spirituality—"Mystics and Zen Masters," "The Way of Chang Tzu," "Zen and the Birds of Appetite."

Daisetz Suzuki, the greatest scholar of Zen Buddhism in Japan, once remarked that no Westerner had ever understood Zen as well as Merton. Woodcock comments very astutely on Merton's turning toward the East in the 1950s. He intimates that it was Merton's deep acquaintance with the most ancient roots of Christian spirituality—Cassian, St. Iranaeus, Origen, the Desert Fathers—which led to his remarkable understanding of Eastern religion. (Woodcock would enjoy the metaphor used by the Benedictine scholar Brother David Steindl-Darst: Merton dug so deeply into the sources of his own Christian heritage that he came out "on the opposite end of the globe," having discovered all common roots.)

Woodcock traces Merton's affinity

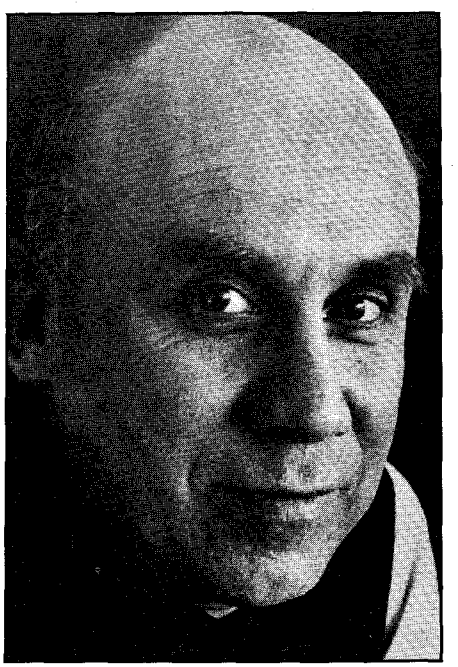

photo of Thomas Merton by John Howard Griffin

with Zen to many other interesting sources: it served him as an intellectual ally against the heritage of Cartesianism and as a spiritual ally against the dominance of a doctrinal Thomism inimical to the intuitive, experiential Cistercian temper. The impudent, irreverent aphorisms of the Zen Koan were ideally suited to Merton's own acerbic wit. And the gratuitous nature of Zen illumination is akin to the Patristic, mystical notions of Christian grace Merton subscribed to, that ceasing of intellectual process in which "there is neither word *nor* silence." Even before turning to the East, Merton, like any true contemplative, had understood that the principal obstacle to attaining enlightenment is to strive for it, or to suffer the deception that you have achieved it. When you think you've got it, you ain't. Or as the ancient Zen saying goes, if you meet the Buddha, kill him.

I can only complain about Woodcock's tendency to overemphasize the importance of Merton's verse, which never had the lyric nobility of his prose. Otherwise this is critical biography at its immaculate, dispassionate best. Since it makes little attempt to acquaint us with Merton's extraordinarily fertile presence, or with the growing anguish of his last years, there is no better companion volume to Woodcock's than the anthology entitled *Thomas Merton: Prophet in the Belly of a Paradox*. It presents many vivid and full-blooded portraits of a man who was as earthy as he was mystical, as warmly joyous toward his friends as he was austere toward himself. James Forest's marvelous essay depicts the arrival of two young Catholics who have hitchhiked to Gethsemane all week without washing or changing clothes, and Merton's Rabelaisian greeting of the pilgrims. Forest had heard uproarious laughter,

> *a kind of monsoon of joy emerging from the guest house. . . . The sound was coming from a monk on the floor in his black and white robes, feet in the air, a bright red face, hands clutching his belly. . . . Thomas Merton laughing half to death on the floor. And laughing about what? The smell! What would have offended so many others delighted him. Our room was like a fish market in a heat wave.*

In the same volume, John Howard Griffin offers eloquent rebuttals to those theorists of the left who felt that Father Louis should have left the cloister for more active participation in social struggles. "Many activists, those of us who were on the streets, understood and treasured Merton's vocation . . . we could not have done what we did without dedicated souls in monasteries and convents to support us." Finally, one must also pay tribute to Gordon Zahn's formidable essay on the development of Merton's pacifism, which describes in meticulous detail the painful process of silencing imposed on Merton by his Cistercian censors in the early 1960s. On one particular occasion an American abbot was misinformed by someone in the intelligence service that Merton was writing for "a communist-controlled publication" (the *Catholic Worker*!). "Though I look through all my pockets," Merton writes his friend with characteristic wryness, "I can not find that old C.P. card. Must have dropped out as I was mopping my brow in the confessional."

Even after he'd moved into his hermitage at Gethsemane, Merton continued his monastic hours notwithstanding increasing ill health, and rose at

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2 a.m. to meditate and write. His prodigality was such that an estimated 800,000 words of unpublished work are said to have been found in his study after his death. The most recent Merton work to be published, *Love and Living*, is one of several collections that have been posthumously assembled by the trustees of his estate. Only half of the essays in this new volume show Merton in top form. Among them: "Learning to Live," which offers remarkably prophetic insights into the rampant narcissism of the 1970s, and is curiously precursive of Christopher Lasch's perspectives on that theme; and two brilliant pieces on Teilhard de Chardin, which are all the more interesting because of the similarities and differences between the two men. Merton and Teilhard saw eye to eye on the fusion of contemplation and social action. However, the anti-scientific, anti-urban, almost Luddite streak in Merton chafed greatly at Teilhard's optimistic belief that modern technology will "humanize and spiritualize matter, thus preparing it for the advent of Christ." And his discussion of Teilhard is all the richer and more polyphonic for this severe divergence of views.

Merton was an *enfant prodige* of American letters, for his work ranged over a phenomenal range of ancient and contemporary, sacred and secular experience. His essays on the work of Ionesco, Sartre or Flannery O'Connor can be as fluent and lucid as his commentaries on Gandhi's brand of religiousness, his discussions of such early Cistercian evangelists as Bernard of Clairvaux or Guerric of Igny. But he was a superb prose stylist and a gifted exegete rather than an original thinker, and he was as uneven as he was prolific. Too many sections of *Love and Living*, for instance, are commentaries on such themes as Purity, Mercy or Christian Humanism which have been much more eloquently expressed in Merton's earlier volumes, particularly in *The New Seeds of Contemplation*, which is destined to go down as one of the great spiritual classics of our century. Mightn't it be wise to let well enough alone after a man has written a devotional passage like the following?

> *. . . the Lord plays and diverts Himself in the garden of His creation, and if we could let go of our own obsession with what we think is the meaning of it all we might be able to hear His call and follow Him in His mysterious, cosmic dance. . . . For the world and time are the dance of the Lord in emptiness. The silence of the spheres is the music of a wedding feast.*

A Catch of Anti-Letters is the least "consequential," yet the most moving, the most engaging volume on Merton to come out this year. It is a divertissement of correspondence between Merton and his Columbia classmate and close friend, the poet Robert Lax. The letters span the last five years of Merton's life and are written in a playful, collegiate, irreverent, semi-private syntax which the two men seem to have evolved together over many decades. They range over the full rich gamut of Merton's character—his Franciscan reverence for nature, his impudent wit, the profoundly theological and liturgical conservatism that accompanied his political radicalism. "Too damn much zowie in the Church if you ask me," Merton writes Lax. "Let's go back to the old restfulness and the orthos. . . . More prayer of Jesus, more gazing at the navel, more kiss of God in the mossy wood."

> *Mark my word man there is no uglier species on the face of earth than progressed Catholics, mean, frivol, ungainly, inarticulate, venomous, and bursting at the seams with progress into the secular cities and the Teilhardian subways.*

Conservative devoutness, however, is often interspersed with Merton's complaints about his censors, and the sly delight he takes in the *samizdat* of mimeographed essays which he smuggles out to his friends.

> *One of the saddest facts of my factual existence is that I am in perpetual trouble with the hoodwinks and the curials, with the bonzes and scrabs, with the imperial tomes and the forthwith communicado from the Vaste Curia. . . .*

> *I sit in my hutch mimeographing forbidden books with the help of fifty-nine uncouth Albanian novices all highly irregular and dissipated ready for the most desperate acts.*

In one fit of pique with his censors Merton plays on his typewriter keys in a Dadaesque parody of automatic writing:

> *aaaa, éé, aaaa, éé, aaaa cé cé caca caca (for the censors a little caca, otherwise they would be duped and hoaxed.) u u, uu, uuu. cu cu, cu cu, cocu, cocu (for the censors a little cocu, how they ever going to do any business if there is no cocu in the manuscript?)*

The "Anti-Letters" also express Merton's curious premonitions of death. I continue to be haunted by the many details, dates, words preceding and

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attending his end which have a quality of augury, of inhuman providence. The last phrase of *The Seven Storey Mountain* reads "That you may become the brother of God and learn to know the Christ of the *burnt men*." His last recorded words to the world, as he ended his address to a religous congress in Bangkok an hour or two before his death, were "And now I shall disappear." He died on the 27th anniversary, to the day, of his ordination into the Trappist order. He died the same day as his favorite Protestant theologian, Karl Barth, with whom he had had an intense correspondence. Are premonitions of the end inevitable to the true contemplative? "I plan to be struck by lightning from going to walk in thunderstorms," he writes to Bob Lax in 1966. "I snap my fingers at life."

There is a letter of Merton's to Lax which breaks me up every time I reread it. It is written the day Merton learns about the death of their mutual and beloved college friend, the painter Ad Reinhardt. Merton is preparing to say Mass for Reinhardt the following morning, and offers him the kind of tribute which he might have preferred to many of the pieties uttered about his own untimely end:

Tomorrow the solemns. The requiems alone in the hermit hatch. Before the ikons the offering. The oblations. The clean oblations all round thunder quiet silence black picture oblations. Make Mass beautiful silence like big black picture speaking requiem. Tears in the shadows of hermit hatch requiems blue black tone. Sorrows for Ad in the oblation quiet peace request rest. Tomorrow is solemns in the hermit hatch for old lutheran reinhardt commie paintblack. Tomorrow is the eternal solemns and the barefoots and the ashes and the masses, oldstyle liturgy masses without the colonels and without the sargeants yelling sit down. Just old black quiet requiems in hermit hatch with decent sorrows good bye college chum.

To which we can only add our own deep grief at Thomas Merton's crazy, early death. To which one can only add good-bye great spirit, peacemaker, Zen master, miraculous writer, bon vivant of God's creation, enduring beacon of the 1960s' fiascos. *Requiescas in pace.* May you be remembered precisely the way you would have wished to be.

Francine du Plessix Gray

Francine du Plessix Gray is the author of *Divine Disobedience: Profiles in Catholic Radicalism* (Knopf) and the novel *Lovers and Tyrants* (Simon & Schuster).

Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia by William Shawcross

(Simon & Schuster; $13.95)

It isn't easy to destroy a country, and the people of Cambodia may yet find a way to reclaim their independence and rebuild their land. But in the last 10 years, they have suffered horribly at the hands of a bizarre alliance of enemies—the North Vietnamese, the Americans, the Khmer Rouge—seemingly committed, whatever their other commitments, to the destruction of Cambodian society. William Shawcross's book is an account of that alliance, emphasizing the American role, because that is the only one that can be documented, but insisting also on the three-sidedness of the effort.

There is another reason for inquiring particularly into American involvement in the destruction of Cambodia, which is suggested by Shawcross's title. Of the three partners, we had the smallest stake; for us Cambodia was a "sideshow." It is easy enough to figure out the purposes of the others. The Vietnamese aimed ultimately at the subordination of Cambodia within an Indochinese federation. The Khmer Rouge aimed at the creation of a primitive, ascetic and autarchic communism. But the Americans never seem to have had a clear local purpose. We participated in the destruction of Cambodia largely in order to demonstrate our capacity for destruction, to reassert an imperial "will" which might otherwise have been thought to have faltered in the long course of the Vietnam war. How American policy might affect the Cambodians never seems to have been a significant consideration in the minds of either Nixon or Kissinger. The crimes of our partners were crimes of ruthlessness and zeal; ours were crimes of ruthlessness and indifference.

Shawcross provides a detailed and persuasive account of American policy, which mostly, though not always, avoids the vice of instant history: the breathless tone, the rapid shifts from narrative to anecdote and from one anecdote to another, the focus on personality, the absence of sustained analysis. *Sideshow* clearly falls within the genre (and is even an example of its most popular form, the disaster story), but it is written with more discipline than is common among the practitioners of instant history, and it reflects a more sustained intellectual purpose.

The purpose is an indictment of American policy. The terms of that indictment are never explicitly laid out, but that may have something to do with the nature of the policy. In Shawcross's account, American ruthlessness does not seem to have been in the service of a coherent program. Our indifference to Cambodian lives was perhaps a product of, perhaps compounded by, an extraordinary ignorance of Cambodian history and politics. Shawcross hovers between the charges of stupidity and immorality. He is tempted, I think, by that cynical saying: it was worse than a crime, it was a mistake. But he ends, rightly, by insisting on the criminality of America's leaders. At the least, it was criminal to be as indifferent as they were to the human consequences of their mistakes.

The story unfolds in stages. Shawcross begins with the secret American bombing of Cambodia in 1969. But stage one is in fact the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong decision to establish guerrilla sanctuaries on Cambodian territory. That was the first violation of Cambodia's neutrality, and since Prince Sihanouk's government could not itself resist, it justified an American response—assuming, what I think is true, that American soldiers, even if they were in Vietnam unjustly, had the usual belligerent rights. More precisely, the existence of the sanctuaries would have justified an American response aimed, with some hope of accuracy and effectiveness, at the sanctuaries. But accuracy and effectiveness were Pen-

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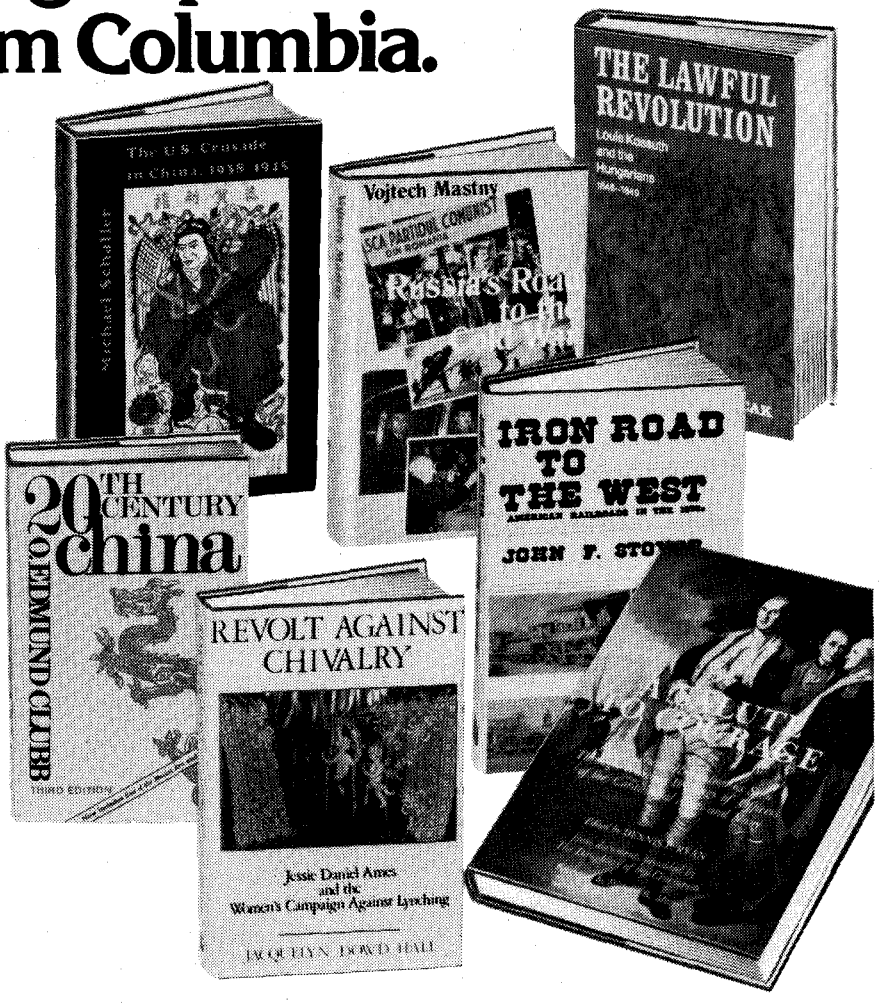
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tagon myths. To his credit, Secretary of Defense Laird seems to have been skeptical of them. But General Abrams convinced himself and then the Joint Chiefs not only that B-52s could actually hit communist bases in the Cambodian jungle, but that we could destroy "in a single blow" the central headquarters of the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong—a kind of Pentagon East—from which, Abrams claimed, the entire guerrilla struggle was run. It is an idea resonant with all the idiocies of the American war effort. In fact, the bombing of 1969 only forced the Communists to disperse their bases, driving them deeper into Cambodia, and further weakening the neutralist regime. It also killed an unknown number of Cambodians.

The secret bombing is stage two, and the overthrow of Sihanouk is stage three. Shawcross has not uncovered any evidence of US complicity in the coup that brought Lon Nol to power. But the conspirators clearly acted in the expectation of American support, which they promptly got. There is an extraordinary moment some months later, when Lon Nol, finally understanding what US support meant, broke down and wept in front of Alexander Haig—a man unlikely to have been sympathetic. After the coup, the Americans happily forgot Cambodian neutrality and came to regard the country as an ally, that is, as a land and people to be used for our own strategic purposes. Stage four immediately followed: the 1970 invasion by American and South Vietnamese troops.

A large-scale conventional attack on an unconventional enemy, the invasion represented a repetition in Cambodia of tactics that had long since been abandoned in Vietnam itself. Like the B-52 bombing, it did less damage to communist forces than to Cambodian civilians. Militarily, its most significant result was the further spread of North Vietnamese units into the Cambodian countryside. Soon enough, they were back on the border, but now they controlled much of eastern Cambodia. In response, we decided to build up Lon Nol's bedraggled and incompetent army into a fighting force capable of repulsing the North Vietnamese: it was this idea which made the new chief of state weep. He knew that Cambodia could not defend itself. Neutrality had been its only defense. As communist troops moved deeper and deeper into the country, American planes followed them—always at a great height. Increasingly, they operated in, and we dropped thousands of tons of bombs on, heavily populated areas.

Why? What was the strategic purpose of all this? Ostensibly, we fought in Cambodia in order to facilitate our withdrawal from Vietnam, "to save American lives"—at a cost in Cambodian lives so incredible as to overwhelm the calculation, except that there is no evidence that American policy-makers counted Cambodians when they did their calculating. Nor is there much evidence that American lives were saved: it probably wasn't in the interests of the Communists to kill a lot of Americans in 1970 and 1971, when the withdrawal was proceeding rapidly. And in any case, the worst of the Cambodian bombing came in 1973, when there were no more American soldiers in Vietnam. By that time, we were bombing not for strategic but for meta-strategic reasons, having to do with credibility and national will. Seen in the light of Shawcross's account, the Mayaguez incident of May 1975 looks like a miniature version of our Cambodian policy as a whole: the display of power for the sake of the display, not for any concrete effects, and without regard to cost. We bombed Cambodia because, the Paris Agreements having ruled out Vietnam and Laos, there was no place else to bomb, and we thought the spectacle important. The bombing steadily increased the crisis of Cambodian society. And the first people to gain from that crisis were the Khmer Rouge.

Stage five of the destruction of Cambodia was the rising of the Khmer Rouge, a tiny band of doctrinaire national Communists, hardly capable of insurrection in the days of Sihanouk, which seized the opportunity of the coup and the invasion to launch its own guerrilla war. The coup brought them thousands of recruits, and the invasion brought them the active support of the North Vietnamese army. After four years of brutal fighting against an enemy with overwhelming superiority in fire power (the Americans were profligate with bombs, Lon Nol's troops with artillery shells), they seized Phnom Penh in 1975. Exactly what part the brutality of the fighting played in shaping their future policies, we cannot know. Some effort has been made by apologists for the Pol Pot regime to claim that it was the war itself that bred the cruelties that were to follow. It appears, however, that from the beginning, in the first territories that it tried to organize, the rule of the Khmer Rouge was harsh and tyrannical. The stream of refugees that began with the American bombing of the countryside continued with the communist conquest of the countryside. Millions of people were uprooted and driven into the cities. And then, after the final Khmer Rouge victory, they were driven out again, ruthlessly marched back to villages and rural camps, where there was, after the years of war, neither food nor shelter

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nor medical supplies available to the refugees. Stage six is the transformation of the Cambodians into a refugee people—a result in which one detects again the strange cooperation of the American government and its communist enemy.

Up to the end, there was no hint in Washington of any concern for the future of Cambodia. One of the most interesting parts of Shawcross's account is a description of last-minute efforts to bring Sihanouk back to Phnom Penh before Pol Pot and his associates could establish themselves there. The Chinese were apparently supportive, but the efforts failed because of the refusal of the US government to acknowledge defeat and abandon Lon Nol. Though we knew his regime to be doomed, we were prepared (the Nixon and then the Ford administrations, though finally not Congress) to fight to the last Cambodian.

It is, all in all, an appalling story that Shawcross has to tell. I find it hard to believe that it is made worse by the fact that much of what we did in Cambodia was illegal under American law. For the Cambodians, the evil would have been the same had Nixon and Kissinger chosen to seek and managed to win congressional consent. But for Americans, the secrecy, the falsification of official records, the endless lies and evasions, the casual disregard of Congress—all this is important indeed. It suggests the need for effective democratic constraints on foreign policy decision-making. Not that democracy guarantees a good policy; it doesn't. But it may set some limits on stupidity and callousness. In fact, the Nixon-Kissinger policy was opposed by virtually everyone in the government who knew anything about Cambodia. And it was also opposed by everyone who had some minimal respect for congressional authority. The policy could not have been carried out had it required public defense and justification.

Hence the extraordinary measures that Nixon and Kissinger took to maintain secrecy and "security"—measures that carried them steadily toward the world of Watergate. Cambodia and Watergate are entangled stories, and Shawcross constantly alludes to the entanglement, though he never pauses to deal with it in a systematic way. He manages to suggest, though not quite to make, an important argument: that Cambodia was the real Watergate. This was the serious executive usurpation and the real corruption of democratic processes, and it led to evils that make the harassments of the Democrats seem petty indeed. And in these evils, this book shows, not only a president but also a secretary of state was implicated.

Michael Walzer

Michael Walzer, a professor of government at Harvard, is the author of *Just and Unjust Wars* (Basic Books).

The Nabokov-Wilson Letters: Correspondence between Vladimir Nabokov and Edmund Wilson, 1940-1971 edited, annotated and with an introductory essay by Simon Karlinsky

(Harper & Row; $15)

These letters, in their abundance and style, are the tangible remains of a protracted love-hate relationship between two remarkable modern literary personages: Edmund Wilson, the rooted American, who was primarily a critic, and Vladimir Nabokov, the uprooted exile from Russia, who was primarily a novelist—in a language not his own. The two thought they understood one another; both had a great deal of professional pride and both were inclined to be polyglot; both also wore the masks of their growing eminence. Their letters can be read as a continuing *pas de deux*, a ballet of "upmanship" that has its comic side if one thinks of two impatient irritable irascible portly figures cavorting on a stage; but this also has its saddening side, for they had great

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talents in their different fields which might have been better used than in this often trivial and pedantic controversy. There are some 250 letters in which we may be diverted by Wilson's correcting Nabokov's occasionally baroque English or Nabokov's *grand seigneur* way of correcting Wilson's Russian—and yet both showing a great measure of warmth and affection for each other. It was inevitable that an explosion should occur sooner or later. This came after *Lolita* and Nabokov's heavily annotated translation of Pushkin. Wilson disliked the novel; and he disliked Nabokov's way of considering himself (as he said in

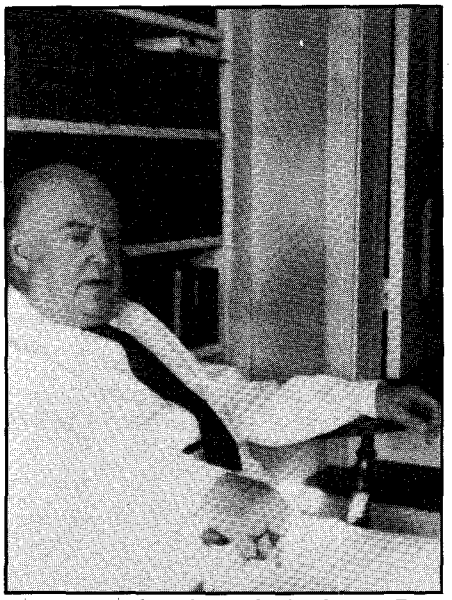

photo of Edmund Wilson by Horst Tappe

a review) "unique and incomparable and that everybody else . . . is an oaf and an ignoramus . . . usually with implications that he is a low class person and a ridiculous personality." The fireworks lasted a long time—in magazines, in correspondence columns, and ultimately in their books.

Their differences lay deeper than in their interminable discussion of Anglo-Russian prosody, their splashing about in trochees, iambs, anapests and amphibrachs. Wilson had accepted—what Nabokov could never accept—the historical fact of the Russian revolution of 1917. Nabokov, cast into the vortex of modern history by that revolution, made a wanderer in Berlin, Paris, New York, lived in nostalgic memories of the Old Russia, where life had seemed benign to the small upper middle class in that vast continent of illiteracy. He could not accept Wilson's probing into the human side of Lenin and Trotsky. To Nabokov they were simply ogres. Wilson could weigh them in the scale of the world's revolutionaries, as we might, with Cromwell, or Castro, Robespierre or, even at this moment, Khomeini. He pleaded guilty to having over-romanticized Lenin in *To the Finland Station* from the then-existing sources. But Wilson was mainly preoccupied, as he put it, with "the writing and acting of history." Nabokov confined himself to the writing (and perhaps at moments the living) of fiction. Wilson admired the poetry in Nabokov and his storytelling gifts; but he could not accept the "lost-world side" of the imaginative émigré. This made Nabokov seem to Wilson ahistorical and apolitical.

The world knows that outside his novels Nabokov was a lover of butterflies, what is called by the awkward word "lepidopterology." He chased their evanescence and their iridescence in many parts of the world, seeking the rarest specimens, even as he chased rare words. In one of his letters, Wilson pointedly asks how Nabokov could "study butterflies from the point of view of their habitat and . . . pretend that it is possible to write about human beings and leave out of account all questions of society and environment." That expressed the core of their differences. Behind the screen of delicate acrimony that descended when they discussed how to render Pushkin, there remained this great divergence and each took a different road. Nabokov was in reality of the party of art for art—and he was an artist. Wilson aspired to art too—like Sainte-Beuve he tried to write novels, poetry, plays—but he was too analytical, too critical. This enabled him to see around Nabokov, but he could not perhaps feel sufficiently the extent to which butterflies and nymphets—the world in miniatures—enabled Nabokov to escape from many of the humiliating realities he had encountered in his struggle for survival.

And then Wilson did not like Nabokov's novels, certainly not a political novel like *Bend Sinister* about a mythical dictator. "You are disinterested in these matters," Wilson writes, "and have never taken the trouble to understand them." Wilson adds, "an artist may not take politics seriously, but if he deals with such matters at all, he ought to know what it is all about." We find Wilson's opinion supported by an English political commentator, Harold Nicolson, who deplored Nabokov's failure in his memoirs to make known "the political realities of pre-revolutionary Russia."

We are given a glimpse in this correspondence of the pre-revolutionary Russia of Nabokov's memories, but one hesitates to use the word "realities." He casts a kind of glamor over the land in which his father, an outstanding liberal who was assassinated, played an enlightened role. "A freedom-loving Russian," Nabokov writes to Wilson,

> *had incomparably more possibility and means of expressing himself than at any time during Lenin's and Stalin's regime. He was protected by law. There were fearless and independent judges in Russia. The Russian* sud *[legal system] after the Alexander reforms was a magnificent institution, not only on paper. Periodicals of various tendencies and political parties of all possible kinds, legally or illegally, flourished and all parties were represented in the Dumas [parliaments]. Public opinion was always liberal and progressive.*

These tinted remarks, so at odds with the history books and eyewitnesses, are prefaced by Nabokov's saying that this existed "despite the inept and barbarous" rule of the czars. "Barbarous" is a strong word; and the reference to "legally and illegally" suggests some

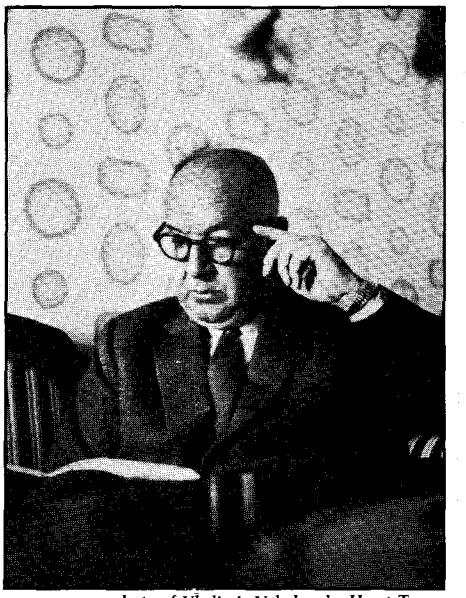

photo of Vladimir Nabokov by Horst Tappe

kind of diminution of the democratic picture Nabokov paints. The novelist seemed to believe that exile in Siberia under the czar was pleasanter than any camp Stalin could devise. For Wilson, however, the question was not one of comparing tyrannies. He was concerned with the meaning of revolution, and with what makes history happen.

Simon Karlinsky, the editor of these letters, is professor of Slavonic literature and languages at Berkeley. He has written a preface in which he takes the side of Nabokov against Wilson where history is concerned; and he seems, in the tears he sheds for the czar, quite as blind to the nature of history as

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his literary model. Or shall we say that he is a linguist who is politically naive: to tell us that Nabokov had a "ringside" seat at the Russian Revolution is to stretch our credibility; and while he pleads impartiality, he chides Wilson, in his lengthy footnotes, for not listening to Nabokov's eloquence; or for forgetting he has told a certain story before; but when Nabokov forgets, he is silent. His logic seems dubious when he wonders why Wilson, who gave Nabokov a certain stimulus to write *Lolita*, later didn't like the novel. These may be small matters, but they illustrate the rather unimaginative editing of these letters. Absent from the book is the "connective tissue" between groups of letters which might have told us where the two men stood in their careers, and the literary-historical background of their sympathies and differences.

Karlinsky sees more similarities than differences. What is clear to the reader is that in spite of their intellectual ballet, they took genuine pleasure in each other's minds. Wilson began by giving Nabokov a great deal of support; he put him into touch with editors and publishers; he helped him obtain a Guggenheim fellowship; he tried to get him placed in universities. Both enjoyed what Wilson called their "intellectual romps"—but Wilson consistently felt that Nabokov's fiction contained an excess of "humiliation"—*Schadenfreude*—of mankind. He speculated that this stemmed from the cruelties Nabokov had experienced as a proud and indeed arrogant Russian liberal, humiliated by history. He had been thrust into a life-role of second-class citizenry as a man without a country, who had asserted himself (and found freedom) by the sheer force of his genius. But the struggle had been bitter and hard.

And so the ballet goes on—Wilson and Nabokov argue about the pronunciation of *nihilist*—or "neehilist"—or whether Merimée really knew Russian or Turgenev English. The correspondence is often a battleground of vanity, pedantry and artistic egotism. It testifies also to the high ideals of art and literature by which both lived; and to their dedication to words, as to an altar of the gods.

Leon Edel

Leon Edel, editor of Edmund Wilson's papers and biographer of Henry James, is author of a book on the Bloomsbury group to be published this summer by Lippincott.

Territorial Rights by Muriel Spark

(Coward, McCann and Geoghegan; $9.95)

There are certain people who use the world "delicious" as a synonym for "pleasurably naughty." Lying late in bed is delicious to them, as are gossip, extravagant falsehoods and any number of other frailties, ranging from minor self-indulgence to outright sin.

Muriel Spark, with her finely honed and unmodish English, is definitely not one of those people. However, her 15th novel does carry that sense of relish in wickedness—the gleeful chortle of a small girl observing the mischief of dashing older playmates. *Territorial Rights* is a story about various unprincipled characters racketing around Venice and doing each other harm. They commit blackmail and adultery, murder and burglary. They enter rooms unlawfully, kidnap, spy, conceal a capital crime and dismember a body. In this high-spirited cast, the only unhappy person is a wronged wife waiting patiently in her spotless English living room. She is virtuous, meek and deadly dull, as she putters around polishing her goldfish bowl on schedule and "keeping the home tidy, watching the electricity so that the bill wouldn't be too high, thinking of the cost of living here in the British Isles where people ought to be."

As a friend of hers says: "You're mistaken if you think wrong-doers are always unhappy. The really professional evil-doers love it. They're as happy as larks in the sky."

The central character in *Territorial Rights* is a young man named Robert. At the opening of the book he is vague and inconclusive, a fact of which he is painfully aware. Having parted from his middle-aged male protector in Paris, he is irritated by the memory of his apologetic good-byes. On his arrival at his Venice hotel, he cannot even select his room; he dithers distractedly between a large room with a shower and a small room with a bath.

But in the short span of time covered by the novel, he comes into his own. He ends as a decisive and successful man, one who is surely never troubled by second thoughts. It's a standard plot—the unformed hero finds his true self, crystallizes, develops strength and style. Only in Muriel Spark's hands, there's a twist. The true self is a professional criminal, one half of a team referred to in the papers as *I 'Bonnie e Clyde' d'Italia.*

It's hard to know what attitude to take about all this. We can easily suspend moral judgment when a fictional criminal is appealing; but Robert is basically unkind, petty and rude. His crimes are messy, involving unnecessary bloodshed, and even more distasteful is his offhand cruelty in personal relationships. In addition, there are all those other characters merrily working their mischief—each of them clever and colorful, but without insides, somehow, so that they lack the solidity either to horrify us or to win us over. When a grisly, long-time blackmailer known as the Butcher sets in motion a new extortion scheme, one of his victims (no angel herself) remarks, "I suppose the Butcher needs more money, now that the cost of living. . . ." She trails off

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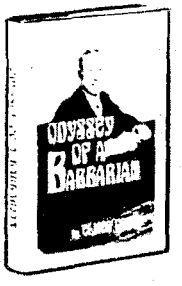

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airily, and the reader smiles. This is, after all, a witty book, and there is something inherently amusing about the commonplace, nuts-and-bolts aspects of wickedness—the "green bulbous drawers" that the shoplifter wears to hide stolen goods, or the fact that the Butcher really is, in public life, a butcher, dragging carcasses of veal off the delivery barge.

But then, Muriel Spark has always been witty. She has run the gamut from dry tongue-in-cheek (*The Comforters*), to belly-laugh comedy (*The Hothouse by the East River*), and most of her humor stems from her sharp-eyed, unflinching observation of human frailty. In two of her novels—*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* and *The Girls of Slender Means*—this humor works a remarkable transformation. We laugh, shake our heads, laugh again—and then we're suddenly struck, almost physically, by what has been going on beneath the surface. "Why!" we think. "This matters, after all; it's more serious than it looks." The shattering impact dealt by Miss Brodie's gradual, insistent sculpturing of her pupils' minds, or by the blithe rescue of a Schiaparelli ballgown during a fatal fire in *The Girls of Slender Means*, reverberates long after we've turned the last page. Evil, in these two books, is a negative force that propels people toward their own, sometimes twisted version of righteousness. "The influences of one's teens are very important," says a man in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, hoping to lead one of Miss Brodie's ex-pupils into disclosing what has made her a nun. "Oh yes," says the ex-pupil, "even if they provide something to react against." And a man who has become a priest after witnessing the central events in *The Girls of Slender Means* writes that "a vision of evil may be as effective to conversion as a vision of good." Both novels—casual and humorous though they may first appear—hit us with an unexpected thud.

But a funny thing has happened to Muriel Spark on the way from *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* and *The Girls of Slender Means*. It's as if, in cataloguing the foibles of her characters, she discovered what fun such cataloguing could be, how "delicious" was the pleasure of shrewdly, ruthlessly describing the shrewdness and the ruthlessness of people without principles. The foibles, then, are listed for their own sakes—amusements in themselves. The inhabitants of her later books are often mere personifications of superficiality: spiteful and quick-tongued, given to epigrammatic remarks, feverishly gay, gossipy, brittle. They would brighten any dinner party, but you'd never like or trust them, and in no way can they be said to represent general humanity. In fact, they're so empty that they're almost incorporeal. Like the ghostly Georgina Hogg in Muriel Spark's first novel, they tend to fade from view in mid-scene. Certainly they're not people you'd think of again once you've closed the book.

It's not that every fictional villain must be struck by a thunderbolt, but you can't help wondering why her characters' crimes have so little effect—on us or on the other characters. What's become of Muriel Spark's devastating thud?

If these questions sound peevish, it's because Muriel Spark is a writer of such skill and intelligence that she has raised her readers' expectations very high. No one knows better how to deal out a story—keeping some parts close to her chest to the last, flicking the rest to the table one by one with a deft turn of the wrist. Look at our introduction to Lina, a girlfriend of Robert's:

> *It was the moment that he came out of the bar that Robert caught a glimpse, away in the distance, of Lina Pancev, the girl whose address he was looking for. It was by her outline that he recognized her unmistakably, for she dressed in a gypsy style, bulky with full gathered skirts and shawls, more common among the young of Paris than of Venice. . . . Robert hurried to catch up with her, negotiating the mothers, prams, children on wild skateboards, students, old men and tourists who were filling the square in the last hours of sunlight. She had gone from sight when he reached the end of the narrow street, but he took the route towards her address and eventually, by the side of the bridge, in a narrow aperture between two high palaces, he saw her again standing there. She looked around her briefly, but only in her immediate vicinity, as if to assure herself that no one could physically stop her from some projected action, rather like a market-thief about to steal a bunch of grapes. Then she bent to lift her voluminous skirt to the knees, and shook out from under it an empty mackerel-tin, a milk-carton, bits of egg-shell and some pieces of old lettuce. She kicked aside this garbage, then walked on to her destination.*

If another heroine has put in a more striking first appearance, I can't think who it could be.

Scenery, in particular, is wonderfully described—Lina's tottering house, with its "dim and puddly privies"; the silvery, heavily curtained, centrally heated drawing room of an older woman who likes to orchestrate her own environment; and above all, Venice. Venice is so much a presence in this book that it is very nearly a character. Only in Venice, we sense, would these people feel quite so free to indulge in their Keystone Cops shenanigans, chasing each other through the streets and canals, dodging in and out of church naves and alleyways. Venice casts a kind of glow that colors all events. It is sometimes murky, sometimes tawdry, and sometimes very beautiful. With its waterborne palaces, it's the perfect territory for the secret-laden, glittery characters of *Territorial Rights*.

The whole novel glitters, in fact. It's insubstantial, oddly hollow; but like anything of Muriel Spark's, it still gives off a fine, hard flash of light.

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler's most recent novel is *Earthly Possessions* (Knopf).

To Set the Record Straight: The Break-In, The Tapes, The Conspirators, The Pardon
by John J. Sirica

(Norton; $15)

In 1973, the *Washingtonian* magazine commissioned a special report evaluating the performance of judges in the national capital area and rendered a highly critical judgment on John Sirica because, among other things, he was a "vicious sentencer" (often referred to around the courthouse as "Maximum John") and had a "misguided view of the purpose of judicial power. . . ." These

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qualities, hardly flattering to Judge Sirica, are the very ones, it seems to me, that made him the hero of Watergate and propelled him from anonymity to national fame. In the year after the 1972 burglary of the Democratic National Committee headquarters, with the nation growing increasingly suspicious of the role Nixon and the men around him played in both the burglary and the cover-up, the judge who gave vent to his own similar suspicions in his courtroom and even acted upon them during the burglars' trial was bound to capture a major share of the public fascination with the Watergate chase.

Judge Sirica, as the chief judge of the District Court of the District of Columbia, had every right to assign to himself the original burglary indictments and the later cover-up and perjury indictments. After all, Chief Justice Hughes used to assign the most important cases to himself and so, although possibly to a lesser degree, did some of his successors. I think, too, that there is nothing inappropriate in a judge putting out a book providing his special insights into an important trial once his role in that trial had been fully completed—or for that matter in a judge making a bundle for his extrajudicial writing labors. My difficulty with Judge Sirica's book is that it seems less a serious effort to "set the record straight" than an account of the subjective reaction of a trial judge to facts that have been hashed over for years.

Judge Sirica's greatest contribution to breaking the Watergate case is generally considered to be the letter James McCord, who had been convicted of the burglary at Democratic National Committee headquarters, addressed to him on May 19, 1973, telling of the political pressure, perjury, etc., at his trial. Judge Sirica apparently agrees. He tells us that as he read the letter from McCord he began to think, "This is it, this is it, this is the break I've been hoping for." When he finished the letter, he told his law clerk, "This is the best damn birthday present I have ever gotten. I always told you I felt someone would talk. This is going to break this case wide open." Sirica goes on to assert that "this case would never have been broken if McCord had elected to stand pat and had not written the letter to me." Without denigrating the importance of the McCord statement in any way, and recognizing fully that the letter no doubt speeded up the ultimate resolution of Watergate, I must say that the cover-up had already begun to unravel and the additional investigation and grand jury proceedings already planned could hardly have been thwarted for long.

Judge Sirica apparently believes that he was singled out as the recipient of the McCord revelation because McCord "sensed that he could trust the courts" and "trusted me." But was this really the reason? The letter was dated just four days before McCord's sentencing was to take place. Sirica's reputation as "Maximum John," his obvious hostility to the defendants at the trial and his even more obvious desire to get at the unindicted higher-ups would have scared a more courageous man than James McCord into doing something to curry favor with the sentencing judge.

Judge Sirica also fails to set the record straight on his actions in seeking to turn the trial of the burglary defendants into a search for the higher-ups who had instigated and funded the burglary. Instead of answering the charges that have been made on this point, Sirica simply reasserts that this is exactly what he was doing. Thus, he complains that "there was no mention in the in-

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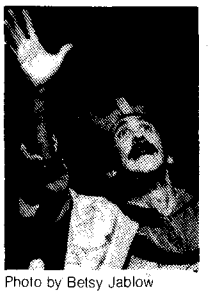
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dictments of the origin of the money the defendants carried," without ever suggesting why evidence on a non-material point should have been pleaded in an indictment. He put the prosecutors on notice, he tells us, that "the public was growing more and more suspicious. There had to be some reason these men had gone into the Watergate. Why not develop it? Why not get all the truth out and settle the question once and for all?" Once the jury was selected, he writes, "I was anxious that they hear *all* the facts" and hoped that "the trial would be the forum in which the unanswered questions of Watergate would be answered."

But the purpose of a criminal trial is to determine the guilt or innocence of the defendants, not to solve unanswered questions concerning others who may have been involved. "The only purpose of a criminal trial," as propounded by the American Bar Association, "is to determine whether the prosecution has established the guilt of the accused as required by law, and the trial judge should not allow the proceedings to be used for any other purpose." In the face of this admonition, it is strange that Sirica makes no attempt to explain his actions to the contrary: not only allowing the proceedings to be so used for the obvious "other purpose" of getting at persons not on trial, but actually using the proceedings for that purpose himself.

Indeed, Judge Sirica seems proud of having used the trial for the other purpose of getting at the higher-ups. Thus, he recounts how he interrupted the opening statement of the attorney for the Cuban defendants, admonishing counsel in front of the jury to "get down to the details. . . . *Who paid them?* Did they get any money to go in there? Was it purely for political espionage? What was the purpose?" With reference to his questioning of the witness Sloan for the same purpose, he says

> *I realized that if I didn't step in fast, this whole parade would go by, right in front of the courthouse, laughing at us. . . . One of the reasons I had always wanted to be a federal judge was that, damn it, nobody could stop me from asking the right questions. I didn't have to sit quietly by and watch this procession.*

Since the judge is proud of his actions, he apparently feels that no explanation required.

Having said this much in criticism of the book, let me say quite frankly that I greatly enjoyed reading it. It is a first-rate story and a refresher course on Watergate; at a time when the Watergate crowd is making a fortune out of their books, no one can be reminded too often just how evil the whole bunch really was.

Additionally, there are several new and interesting disclosures in the book: the irony that at an earlier time John Dean sought a position as Judge Sirica's law clerk; the chutzpah of Henry Kissinger in trying to discuss with the judge a reduction in John Mitchell's sentence; the fact that Sirica read the Constitution six times in preparation for the argument on the Nixon tapes; Sirica's plan to enforce the tapes ruling by hitting Nixon in his pocketbook; Sirica's belief that Nixon should not have been pardoned and would have been sent to jail if convicted before him; Sirica's intention to hold in contempt the lawyers for the defense in the Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Mitchell case if they did not stop baiting him.

Possibly the best thing in the book is John Sirica's beautiful story of how he got to the federal bench and his gratitude to his parents, especially his mother, for all the help they gave him, and to those who befriended him along the way, including his best friend, Jack Dempsey. Sirica's love of this country and the opportunities it affords to all come through time after time.

But I still cannot help feeling that our country would be stronger today if Judge Sirica had not handled the burglary trial the way he did. It would have been better, it seems to me, if he had been punctilious in protecting the rights of the defendants rather than seeking to use the trial to resolve all the questions about those not indicted. As Sirica concedes, the prosecutors had already planned "to get convictions in the break-in case, then obtain a grant of immunity from further prosecution and bring all the figures in the case back before the grand jury to give the full story behind the break-in." There was no warrant for Sirica to go beyond his proper judicial role. And the statement of the Court of Appeals, in affirming the burglary convictions, that Sirica's conduct of the trial "was in the highest tradition of his office as a federal judge," is more a commentary on anti-Watergate hysteria than a justification for Sirica's misuse of judicial power. This same hysteria brought spokesmen for the greatest civil liberties organization in the history of the nation (American Civil Liberties Union) and the country's foremost liberal magazine (*TNR*) to applaud Sirica's conduct. But all of this cannot alter the end-justifies-the-means philosophy that surrounded Sirica's actions. There may come a time in the future when a president is wrongfully beleaguered as President Andrew Johnson once was. When that happens, one may well wish for a stronger precedent for fair process than this one.

Joseph L. Rauh Jr.

Joseph L. Rauh Jr. is a civil rights, civil liberties and labor lawyer in Washington, DC and former national chairman of the Americans for Democratic Action.

A preview of fall books

The ability to survey the fall lists of American publishers coherently has probably been denied to every mortal except Thomas Lask. But here is one man's effort. I do not pretend to be exhaustive. I have occasionally been limited by the failure of publicity directors to deliver promised information. I am also constrained by the fact that the *New Republic* is not *Publisher's Weekly*, and must leave room to discuss other matters. So I have imposed a few criteria for elimination. Books which will go unmentioned include those on dancing and acting, those detailing the handicaps of womanhood, and those which chronicle inspired triumphs over the injustices that society has heaped atop biology.

To begin: Little, Brown will light up the sky this fall with two stars of the first order. Henry Kissinger will publish the first volume of his memoirs, covering the years from 1968-72 and tentatively called *The Realities of Power*. And Norman Mailer will disgorge his first

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full-length book since *Marilyn, The Executioner's Song*, which is subtitled "fact as fiction" and deals with the career of the late murderer, Gary Gilmore.

Other famous and current writers who will publish books this fall include: Mary McCarthy, *Cannibals and Missionaries* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), a novel about an Iranian hijacking of a plane filled with liberals and art collectors, and takes place in the days of the shah; James Baldwin, *Just Above My Head* (Dial), which traces the life of a world-famous gospel singer; Jerzy Kosinski, *Passion Play* (St. Martin's), a novel about a polo player; Philip Roth, *The Ghost Writer* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), a novel concerning a young Jewish writer's search for a spiritual father; Tom Wolfe, *The Right Stuff* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), dealing with the early astronauts; Christopher Isherwood, *My Guru and His Disciple* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), a factual account of the "Paul" episode in *Down There on a Visit*; William Golding, *Darkness Visible* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), his first novel in 12 years; John Updike, *Problems and Other Stories* (Knopf); Paul Theroux, *The Old Patagonian Express* (Houghton Mifflin), the record of a train trip through the Americas; and John Kenneth Galbraith, *Annals of an Abiding Liberal* (Houghton Mifflin), a collection of essays.

Distinguished representatives from abroad include: John Le Carré, *Smiley's People* (Knopf), a novel; Doris Lessing, *Shikasta* (Knopf), the first in a cycle of novels set in the future; Kobo Abe, *Secret Rendezvous* (Knopf), a novel; Nadine Gordimer, *Burger's Daughter* (Viking); Gabriel Garcia Márquez, *The Evil Hour* (Harper & Row), a short novel; C.P. Snow, *A Coat of Varnish* (Scribners); Juan Marse, *The Fallen* (Little, Brown), an acclaimed bestseller in Spain when censorship was lifted after the death of Franco; *A Woman of the Future* (Braziller), by the Australian, David Ireland; and *Six Problems for Don Isidro Parodi* (Dutton), by Jorge Luis Borges.

Among the eminent graybeards publishing books this fall are Louis Auchincloss, who is publishing two of them: *Persons of Consequence: Queen Victoria and her Circle* (Random House), an illustrated history, and *Life, Law and Letters* (Houghton Mifflin), essays and sketches; Isaac Bashevis Singer, whose story collection, *Old Love*, and *Nobel Lecture* will be published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux, the latter in a bilingual edition, and who is also the subject of a biography by Paul Kresh (Dial); William L. Shirer, *Memories of Gandhi* (Simon & Schuster); Alistair Cooke, *Letters from America* (Knopf), a collection of BBC broadcast pieces from the past 10 years; *TNR*'s own Richard Strout, *TRB Columns* (Macmillan)—200 of them from the past 35 years; and Kay Boyle, *Fifty Stories* (Doubleday).

Several deceased eminences will also return to life in print; Janet Flanner, *Janet Flanner's World: Uncollected Writings 1932-1975* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich); John O'Hara, *Two By O'Hara* (HBJ); Ernest Hemingway, *87 Poems* (HBJ); Lionel Trilling, *Prefaces to The Experience of Literature* and *The Last Decade: Essays and Reviews 1965-1975* (HBJ); *Virginia Woolf, Letters: Vol. V* (HBJ); Thorton Wilder *American Characteristics and Other Essays* (Harper & Row); and, in photographic form, Hubert Humphrey, in *Hubert: The Humphrey I Knew* (Putnam's), by his personal physician, Edgar F. Berman, MD.

Many professors of English will rejoice at the reappearance on the fiction lists of John Barth, with *Letters* (Putnam's), his first novel in a decade, and John Hawkes, *The Passion Artist* (Harper & Row). Perhaps a few of them will also examine *A Game Men Play* (Dial) by Vance Bourjaily.

Some publishers are taking the opportunity to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the stock market crash. Doubleday plans a splashy publication of *The Day the Bubble Burst: A Social History of the Stock Market Crash* by Gordon Thomas and Max Morgan-Witts. Macmillan will issue *1929* by Warren Sloate, and Houghton Mifflin will reissue John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Great Crash*. Viking will conduct festivities upon the 10th anniversary of the Woodstock Festival by publishing two books; *Woodstock Census: The Nationwide Survey of the Sixties Generation*, conducted not by the federal government but by authors Rex Weiner and Deanne Stillman; and *Barefoot in Babylon: The True Story of the Creation of Woodstock*, by Robert Spitz, which develops the startling thesis that many of the festival's promoters were less interested in the creation of universal peace and love than was widely supposed at the time. Also on the subject of the 1960s, the journalist Milton Viorst will publish *Fire in the Streets* (Simon & Schuster).

Some biographies which are thought particularly notable by their publishers are: *Alban Berg* by Karen Manson (Houghton Mifflin); *Royal Charles: Charles II and the Restoration* by Antonia Fraser (Knopf); *Maugham* by Ted Morgan

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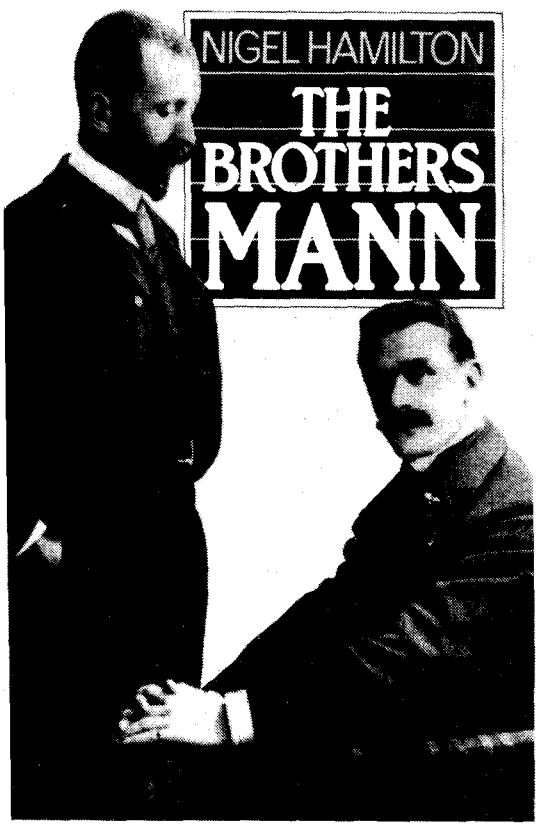

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(Simon & Schuster); *Napoleon: Master of Europe* by Alistair Horne (Morrow); *The Good-Natured Man*, a life of Oliver Goldsmith by Leonard Wibberly (Morrow); *The Life of Katherine Mansfield* by Antony Alpers (Viking); *Mao* by Ross Terrill (Harper & Row); *The Dream Maker: William C. Durant, Founder of General Motors* by Bernard Weisberger (Little, Brown), *Marquand*, a life of John P. Marquand by Millicent Bell (Little, Brown); *The Intricate Music*, the first full-scale biography of John Steinbeck, by Thomas Kieran (Little, Brown); *A Lion for Love*, a critical biography of Stendhal by Robert Alter (Basic Books); *Freud, Biologist of the Mind*, by Frank J. Sulloway (Basic Books), advertised as the first serious reassessment since Ernest Jones's; *Desolate Angel: Jack Kerouac, the Beats, and America*, by Dennis McNally (Random House); *George S. Kaufman: His Life, His Theater*, a critical biography by Malcolm Goldstein (Oxford University Press); *American Aristocracy: The Lives and Times of James Russell, Amy and Robert Lowell* by C. David Heymann (Dodd, Mead); *Leon Trotsky* by Ronald Segal (Pantheon); *Being Bernard Berenson* by Meryle Secrest (Holt, Rinehart & Winston); *Alexandre Dumas* by F.W. J. Hemmings (Scribners); *The Roosevelt Chronicles*, a family history by Nathan Miller (Doubleday); and *W.H. Auden: Life of a Poet* by Charles Osborne (HBJ).

Among many historical works, Carl Schorske's *Fin de Siecle Vienna* (Knopf) is highly touted. McGraw-Hill will publish Page Smith's *The Sharing of America*, concerning the early republic. Robert Wohl, in *The Generation in 1914* (Harvard), examines the consciousness of European middle-class young men at the time. Oscar Handlin examines the issue of *Truth in History* (Harvard). E. H. Carr serves up a one volume history of *The Russian Revolution* (Macmillan), and T. R. Fehrenbach writes the history of Mexico in *Fire and Blood* (Macmillan). Ronald Hingley's *Russian Writers and Soviet Society* (Random House) is an ambitious literary history. In *The Nuclear Question* (Cambridge), Michael Mandelbaum traces the history of nuclear weapons. In *America Revised* (Little, Brown) Frances FitzGerald asserts that schoolbooks today corrupt history into propaganda more often than they used to.

Among works of social thought, Robert Nisbet's *History of the Idea of Progress* (Basic Books) is unlikely to be buried in the avalanche of fall books. *The Poems of Stanley Kunitz 1928-1978* (Little, Brown) will evoke considerable interest in bardic circles, as will a new version of Robert

THE CAIRN IN LOCH AN DUIN

Is this all we will know of the dark,
bone dark under rock and just out
of dry reach? This black water lake
that supposes no trout, now and then catches
blue fire under a quick passing gap in the clouds.
It must have been planned, the cairn
set just beyond our wading range,
some message understood: leave us alone.
Leave them alone. Don't ask in Bragar
the date of the cairn.

We guess a spirit wants out from under
the rock. One aching jawbone cries to come ashore,
to climb the short hill to Bragar
and sit there with other old Celts and chat.
What would he tell us of time, of long days grinding
across the sky without us? Do some clouds repeat
like planets? Any improvements in food?
And we'd ask him one question that burns:
Dead, will we, without going mad
envy the town we see every day and can't enter?

Death may be weaker than sleep. We know flesh
rejoins water and dirt, and for centuries believed
the soul unites with the sky. The memory
would find some special other place, a gold cottage
that houses all we were, are and will be, high on a moor
over the open ocean, where wind slams home
and a child cries excited.
Can't we be more than just bone under this plain pile
of rock in a lake close to shore,
the living tauntingly near?

In Bragar a whale jaw forms an arch
and through it the living pass to market.
That giant bone reminds us more than the cairn
of what's left behind one darkening moment—
rain, music and tongue.
This is where sky bears down
year after year and light ranges dim
to dim blinding. We're left with whatever
we find inside to keep going.
Bones mix in the cairn.

The water flames blue and beyond the cairn
one ripple. We can bait a hook,
can cast and wait. This is no song of reprieve.
The small jaw stays locked in stone.
The whale jaw opens wider in the town.
The surface fills with ripple. We cry
"trout, trout, trout" to each other. Hard. Honor the trout
this season honor goes lonely as bones.
They play the surface like children,
what we have been.

Richard Hugo

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Penn Warren's *Brother to Dragons* (Random House). Geoffrey Wolff has composed a memoir of life with father in *The Duke of Deception* (Random House), and he has edited *The Edward Hoagland Reader* (Random House). Hoagland himself has written *African Calliope: A Journey to the Sudan* (Random House). Knopf is ballyhooing *Endless Love* as the "breakthrough book" of novelist Edward Spencer, author of *Preservation Hall*, and Doubleday plans the same treatment for my *Invitation to the Eighties*. Don't blame me, and remember that you were warned here first.

Mitchell S. Ross

Mitchell S. Ross is the author of *The Literary Politicians* (Doubleday). His new book, *Invitation to the Eighties*, will be published in January 1980 by Doubleday.

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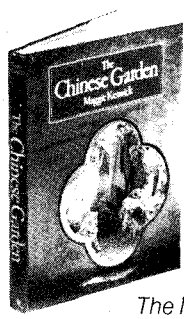
Brief Reviews

The Bad Communist
by Max Crawford

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $8.95)

Two lists can be compiled for the past decade or so: casualties and survivors. Max Crawford counts as a survivor. In the last five years he has published two fine novels, and he has also written for the underground press. He has lived with the times and through them, and now, in *The Bad Communist*, he has lived—profoundly, marvelously—to tell his tale.

The novel is about casualties of the 1960s. In the Palo Alto, California of 1972, a group of radicals aids in the jailbreak of one of their cult heroes, a petty criminal and self-proclaimed "revolutionary" by the name of Boy Floyd. These events and their pathetic outcome are viewed with cynicism and irony through the eyes of King Tyler, disillusioned young radical lawyer and increasingly reluctant member of the group and of the larger Maoist "Revolutionary Army" to which they all belong. Crawford has him bear austere witness to disintegration: the dissolution of his law firm, his parents' marriage and his own, of psyches into psychoses, of activist organizations into extremist splinter-groups playing a game of musical collectives. It is no longer possible to be a comrade, an



"A fascinating and beautifully illustrated book ..." – *Publishers Weekly*

The Chinese Garden

by Maggie Keswick

Luxuriant, intricate, an apparent haphazard of hills, trees, water and rock piles, the Chinese garden actually reveals a profound and ancient view of the world and of man's place in it. Beautifully illustrated with hundreds of the author's own unique photographs (many in color), this 200-page book affectionately explores the gardens' myths and meanings, providing insights into a great civilization.

The New York Times Book Review called it, "No ordinary garden tour, but a first-rate job of intellect, intelligently illustrated." *Asia* said, "Informative and sensitive, this highly attractive book is not only an excellent introduction to Chinese gardens, but a fine work of interpretation." **$35**

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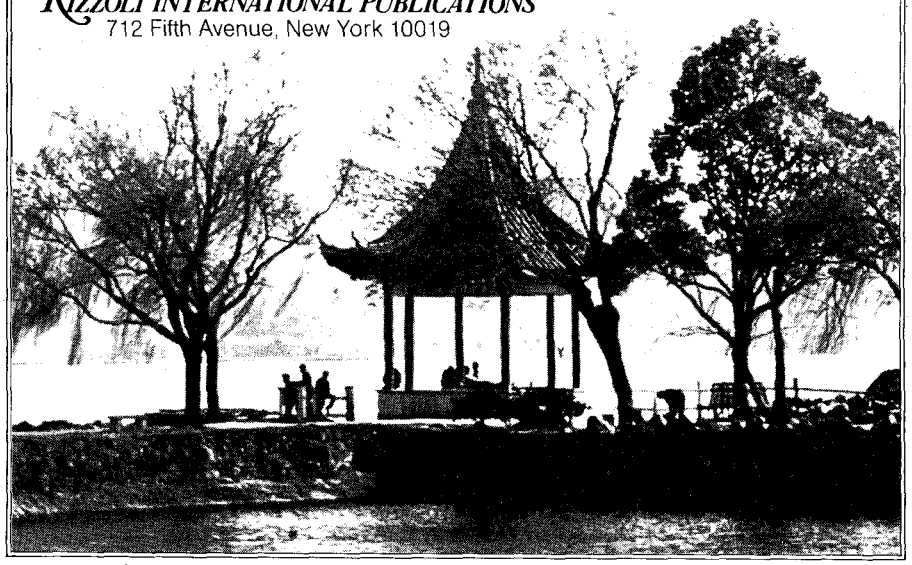

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unselfish soldier in the ranks of the revolution.

Crawford's story is a day-by-day report, like a legal document submitted as evidence in a trial—a trial in which King makes himself the chief defendant. Against this deceptively monotone background, there is weirdness, despair, violence and death everywhere. Crawford treats the violence as a given, the only means of expression in lives suffused with "hatred," both personal and public.

Crawford perceptively conveys how the movement has degenerated into aimless motion and terrorism. King tries to discover the reason for all of this, but he is a man who is always looking through windows only to see his own reflection. Despite a murder subplot, *The Bad Communist* is more chiller than thriller, and the coldest wind blowing through it is the loss of belief.

Crawford seems to level his main indictments against people's failure to learn from history. King's sentimentality about the past makes him a bad Communist, but a sympathetic man. In *The Bad Communist*, nostalgia becomes redemption, a healing. This promise of redemption and the resurgence of caring prevent this novel from becoming just another *post mortem—Hair* in Dolby stereo. *The Bad Communist* belongs to our latest genre: the post-1960s novel, the reconsideration of the late 1960s from the late 1970s. As such it ranks among the best.

Celia Betsky

Celia Betsky is spending the year as an AAUW/Smithsonian Fellow at The National Collection of Fine Arts in Washington, DC.

Snatched from Oblivion: A Cambridge Memoir by Marian Cannon Schlesinger

(Little, Brown; $8.95)

It's a relief (mixed with only the slightest of disappointments) that this is not yet another hot memoir filled with gossip about glittering people. Instead, Marian Cannon Schlesinger has written an engaging account of her family in Cambridge, Massachusetts during the first half of this century. Back then Radcliffe women had to don hats and gloves when they ventured down to Harvard Square. It was a time when X rays were a discovery that Marian's father, Dr. Walter B. Cannon, physiologist and professor at the Harvard Medical School, was among the first to put to use; a time also when the birth control movement was new and in need of crusaders like Marian's unconventional mother, Cornelia James Cannon.

At the end of the 19th century this outspoken woman and Dr. Cannon headed separately from the Midwest to the New England ivory tower, where they met, stayed and raised a Cambridge clan. "There was nothing nuclear about our family," Schlesinger declares. She and her four siblings enjoyed three mothers: their own and two maiden aunts, their father's sisters—and not a homebody among them. Cornelia Cannon not only spread the birth control word; she also wrote novels and loudly participated in community affairs (the kind of mother who often mortifies her children when they're young and inspires them when they've grown up). The aunts were embarked on the then unconventional course of successful careers and spinsterhood—plenty of examples of feminine independence for Marian and her three sisters. Eminent in medical circles, Dr. Cannon, outnumbered, was retiring at home; when it was his turn to invite his scientific guests to dine, Schlesinger remembers, he was always uneasy about the impression his large and lively household might make.

The familial feminist tone was matched by a dominant female community in Cambridge at large. Schlesinger captures the feisty attitude of "the free-spirited ladies of Cambridge" whom she feels were central to that enclave's social and cultural history:

> *They often looked upon males as frail creatures who had to be handled and propitiated like small children. Having dealt with them by placing them on their pedestals (their accustomed perches where they happily sat), the ladies went ahead with the serious business of their lives: their own self-improvement, whether it lay in intellectual pursuits, in social reform, in educational innovation or in the arts and literature.*

Cornelia James Cannon, "the central figure and heroine" of Schlesinger's memoir, was the rare lady who actually accomplished that whole range of serious business. And she urged her children on to adventures in Cambridge and beyond. She led them—sketchbooks always at the ready—through Europe in an ungainly touring car in 1929 and sent them further afield in later years (Marian went to China, where she joined her sister and brother-in-law, China scholar John K. Fairbank). After Dr. Cannon died in 1945, Mrs. Cannon's own passion for travel flared, and she toured remote clinics in the Philippines, India, Turkey, Greece, Israel, carrying a "battered old suitcase . . . stuffed with contraceptives of all sorts and sizes," leaving them and vivid memories of herself behind. This major campaign of Cornelia Cannon's is still timely enough, though her spirit and the age when it flourished are gone. But her daughter has snatched some of her "full sense of being," her charm and her energy, and preserved it in this memoir.

A. H.

White Teacher by Vivian Gussin Paley

(Harvard University Press; $8.95)

Vivian Paley describes *White Teacher* as a morality tale. But a morality tale usually depicts a conflict between right and wrong; and this account of Paley's tenure as a teacher in a private integrated school tells simply of her conscientious efforts to discover the right, and to do it. *White Teacher* is really a nonfictional *bildungsroman*, a chronicle of both Paley's educational progress and that of the kindergarteners under her charge.

Paley embarks on her educational pilgrimage with all the baggage of self-confessed liberalism. Her prejudices are balanced by a passion to overcome them. Zealous about education, she views the classroom as a proving ground where preconceptions—her own and her childrens'—can be scrutinized, recast or discarded.

Set in a middle-class private school in a university community, Paley's story is told through carefully observed anecdotes about her classes. Its characters are her kindergarteners, as well as their parents and an extraordinary black student teacher whose openness serves as a valuable example to Paley. Paley writes simply and directly—much as one would expect of someone accustomed to addressing five-year-olds.

The stories, beyond even the lessons she draws from them, are very fine. The

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troubled black boy whose vocabulary of four-letter words is a weapon aimed at "honkies"; the shy Chinese girl who shuns reminders of her heritage; the West Indian, Claire, whose fluency at home dissolves at school in an inability to make believe—these children are real and touching, as well as symbolic markers on Paley's own path to enlightenment.

One of Paley's main classroom goals is to break down the social barrier between insider and outsider. Before she can succeed, however, she must confront her own feelings of outsidedness—not only as a white teaching black children, but as a Jew in a world of Gentiles. Paley admits that as a child her Jewishness had sometimes been a source of shame. In adult life, it has caused her to gloss over differences between people, pretending that they didn't exist. In the course of *White Teacher*, this weakness becomes her strength, as she gains an appreciation of diversity that is neither self-conscious nor simplistic.

White Teacher documents an admirable dedication, rare in any profession. As a teacher in a nearly lily-white school in the south, Paley relates how she longed for the challenge of an integrated classroom. Granted her wish, she now wonders why she is not at the front lines, teaching in a ghetto school.

Call it white liberal guilt if you will, but this eloquent little book is a testament to the good such guilt produces.

Julia M. Klein

Julia M. Klein writes a column on women's issues for the *Philadelphia Daily News*.

The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and the American Intervention by Piero Gleijeses

(Johns Hopkins; $22.50)

In 1965, 23,000 American troops (about half the number in Vietnam at the time) invaded the Dominican Republic. Their objective was to block an attempt by "constitutionalist" military officers to reestablish the legal government of Juan Bosch, removed by a military coup two years before. What American officials hypocritically termed a "humanitarian intervention" might more accurately be labeled "America's Czechoslovakia." In a superb history, Piero Gleijeses, professor at Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies, demonstrates why this is so. *The Dominican Crisis* is a brilliant critique of the dark underside of American foreign policy; it will prove to be the definitive work on the American intervention for years to come.

Gleijeses's book reads more like a Russian novel than an expanded doctoral dissertation (which it is). With a novelist's skepticism for easy truths and passion for the complexities of human experience, he strives to see Dominican society whole. In complete command of the sources (he has interviewed virtually every major actor in the Dominican drama), he expertly leads the reader through the maze of Dominican politics in the tumultuous period after Rafael Trujillo's assassination: the election of the left-of-center Bosch in 1963, the subsequent rightist coup, and the constitutionalist countercoup in 1965 which, in nearly succeeding, sparked the American intervention. Gleijeses's thesis is that American ignorance of the domestic political situation in the Dominican Republic and paranoia about the "Castro/Communist" far left destroyed the one opportunity for a non-Cuban model of social change in the Caribbean region. Unlike most American critics who blame one man, Lyndon Johnson, for the American action, Gleijeses blames the entire foreign policy of American liberalism.

There are few heroes in *The Dominican Crisis*. Its author delights in revealing how men use high-sounding words to mask their pursuit of interest and privilege: in particular, the Dominican ruling class who cynically manipulated the language of democracy in order to retain US support, and American policymakers who beneath their "Alliance for Progress" rhetoric were more concerned with "anti-communist stability" than democracy. Gleijeses also documents the chronic weakness and "impervious political stupidity" of the Dominican far left (which makes the American obsession with a Castro-style revolution in the Dominican Republic seem all the more ludicrous).

If there is any hero in this book, it is perhaps the Dominican people. For a brief moment—and against the expectations of left and right alike—they turned the tables on centuries of politi-

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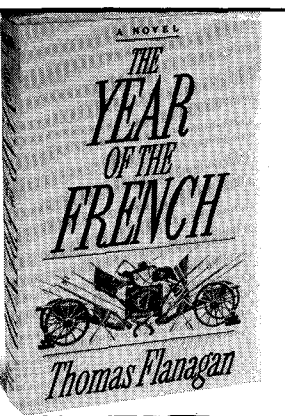

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cal oppression. Gleijeses quotes *Washington Post* correspondent Dan Kurzman who witnessed the major confrontation between the constitutionalist and loyalist forces:

> *Always they had been at the mercy of men with guns and they had forced the tanks to retreat. They were beating the armed forces which symbolized their centuries of misery. They realized for the first time that they possessed a strength they never had before imagined could be theirs.*

Later that same day, the Marines landed.

Robert Howard

Robert Howard is a Washington writer.

Current Paperbacks

Amok
by George Fox

(Fawcett; $2.50)

The surface of this adventure novel is lurid enough: 30 years after the Japanese surrender of the Philippines, a seven-foot Japanese soldier—The Amok—reappears in a remote valley of Luzon and with his giant samurai sword proceeds to split some of the valley's prominent inhabitants in two—and sometimes in three and four. Beneath the surface, however, this is a serious novel about the lasting consequences of the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, when the Philippines—like Vichy France—was split between those who cooperated with the enemy and those who continued to resist. The Amok brings the hatreds of the occupation back with him; and the depiction of these dark passions at work among his characters gives Mr. Fox's man's magazine story a firm moral center.

A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962
by Alistair Horne

(Penguin Books; $5.95)

Present-day Algeria was conceived in circumstances of appalling brutality. The statistics—1,000,000 Muslims and 20,000 French killed—only hint at the price the French and the Muslims had to pay so that Algeria could come into being. The war nearly brought civil war to France: today it seems unbelievable, but in the wake of the generals' putsch in 1961 Parisians expected rebellious "paras" to fall from the skies at any moment. It also brought moral disgrace to the French army for the torture it had inflicted on captured Algerian guerrillas, who themselves killed both Europeans and uncooperative Muslims with atavistic ferocity (cutting the throats of wounded French soldiers and stuffing their mouths with their own severed genitals was only one of the guerrillas' methods of spreading terror). Alistair Horne has told this grisly story masterfully and with a novelist's understanding for all sides. Thus he make us feel the fury of the Muslims, who had been treated as little better than beggars ever since the French stole their country in 1830; the stubbornness and frustrations of the *pied noir*, the French settlers in Algeria, who were unwilling to give up the land their fathers had pioneered; the shame of the French army which had lost in 1940 to the Germans and in 1954 to the North Vietnamese and so was determined not to lose again to the Algerians. And finally Mr. Horne brings home to us the immense moral and physical courage of Charles de Gaulle, who was brought to power by mutinous generals in Algeria in 1958 only to betray them—but save France—by guaranteeing self-determination to the Algerians in 1961. The savage war ended with the *pied noir* permanently exiled from their home, with the leading generals of the French army facing court martials for treason, and with Algeria shattered and impoverished but free—at any rate of the French and their humiliating rule.

The Reader Over Your Shoulder: A Handbook for Writers of English Prose
by Robert Graves and Alan Hodge

(Random House; $3.95)

Originally published in 1942 when England was in as much trouble as the English language, this delightful book includes a section on "The Principles of Clear Statement"—the questions as to who, what, how much, how many and so on, that a writer should ask himself in order to make his meaning clear to readers not gifted with mind-reading ability. In a later section of their text, the authors apply these principles to patches of prose by some famous authors; and it is consoling to see how badly T.S. Eliot, G.B. Shaw, Lord Keynes and Bertrand Russell could sometimes write. This section, however, is less brisk and funny than the first, where we encounter frequent examples like this, from a newspaper lead: "Mussolini accused the Führer of having lost the war by attacking unnecessarily Soviet Russia." The example illustrates Principle Ten: that every word should be in its right place in the sentence.

Freud: The Mind of a Moralist
by Philip Rieff

(University of Chicago Press; $6.95)

"In the double title of the book lies its motive and main point. I have tried to show the mind of Freud, not the man or the movement he founded, as it derives lessons on the right conduct of life from the misery of living it." So begins this reissue of a magisterial 1959 intellectual biography. Freud emerges from these pages as an enemy of liberationist movements which falsify the human situation by promising an end to repression. Mr. Rieff reminds us that Freud's favorite poet was Milton and that in the Freudian scheme of things repression has the same sacred status as original sin in Milton's dramatic theology. Repression makes us miserable, but since it also makes us civilized we can't live without it. Freud is thus a tragic moralist for Mr. Rieff, and the major criticism one can make of his book is that he neglects the therapeutic side of Freud's mind in making this case.

(Beginning with this column TNR will review current paperbacks every month.)

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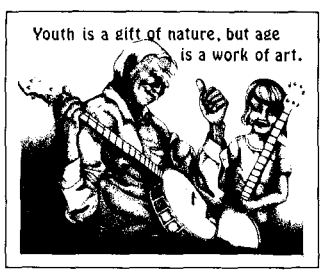

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Once, when I was very young, and Israel younger still, I had the good fortune to arrive in the Land amidst refugees. No, I was not driven there by despair or carried there on yearning. I had come as a tourist. But I also wanted to experience, insofar as I could, what the Return meant to people who had hoped for it, so to speak, for centuries. The Jews in Morocco lived under what surely must have been the most benign rule in Islam. But it was not benign enough for them to feel secure against what the dogma or caprice of their rulers might bring down upon them. Somewhat less driven, then, than the many hundreds of thousands of other Jews from the Moslem crescent whom dire circumstance and fervent prayer brought to Israel, the 200-odd Moroccan Jews with whom I sailed from Marseilles to Haifa were joined in Piraeus by a comparable number of Jews from Romania, pathetic remnants of European Jewry, early escapees from the liberation imposed by the Red Army. As we approached the parched corner of the world allotted to them as a refuge by the great powers, and already prepared for them in decades of toil by their brethren, I became a believer: not by any means in a theology, but in the unity of a people. I have been fortunate in my arrivals in Israel. Once en route to Israel I sat next to an old woman whom the First World War, the camps and the gulag had kept from her brother for 50 years. The El Al jumbo that took me to Israel at the end of last month also brought Mark Dymshits and Edward Kuznetsov, just released from the Soviet prisons, on the last leg of their long journey to Zion.

Habib Elghanian is the Iranian Jewish businessman and communal teacher who was killed for practicing that obligation of his faith which is love of Zion. Nothing attested to any charges that his devotion harmed Iran. In one sense, murdering him was just another of the crazed ayatollah's acts aimed at "cleansing society of the putrid vestiges of the old regime." But it is more than that. State Department spokesman Hodding Carter, part of whose job it is to make everything rotten seem tolerable, reassured the press that Elghanian had been tried and executed as an individual and not as a representative of the Jewish community. Every Jew at Dachau was killed as an individual, too: that's how people die. But like Elghanian, all of them went to their deaths because of the simple existential fact of being a Jew. That's why the Jews of Iran now live in terror, whatever vague reassurances they've been given. Their fear is not individual; it is a group fear. Another bit of evidence of how horrific the new regime is. It's important to remember that the Iranian left (with cheering from appropriate American balconies) helped sweep Khomeini into power, more or less on the analysis *durch Hitler Kommen wir.*

It's not only the United States that doesn't have a government as good as its people. Menahem Begin is a pedantic, spiteful, incompetent man whose sparse talents for governing, rather than opposing, probably have been spent in securing Israel's treaty with Egypt. That's no mean accomplishment, but it's not an antidote to the present 60 percent annual rate of inflation in Israel, which his finance minister predicted this week may soon run to three digits. Last month alone inflation was nine percent. Begin's hard-line *Likud* party has a deal with its partners in the ruling coalition, in the free market Liberal party. The Liberals don't object to Begin's West Bank schemes as long as he and his group allow them to ruin the economy. Begin, for his part, cares nothing and knows less about economics. He allows a free hand there in exchange for his free hand in the territories. What he means by autonomy, it seems, is allowing the Arabs to collect their own garbage. What the Arabs now mean is another fully sovereign Palestinian state. Both notions are unrealistic and dangerous. Begin means to circumscribe Arab aspirations and reify his own by vast Jewish settlement. I myself believe that settlement in the territories is justified, but only in the unpopulated areas along the borders and primarily for security. There's some justification in asserting the reciprocal principle that Jews may live among Arabs anywhere in the Holy Land, much as Arabs live among Jews. But Begin's plan won't work. First of all, there aren't enough Jewish settlers to settle. Most of those West Bank settlements you read about are dreadful little bivouacs. Even if you call the West Bank Judea and Samaria, they're still bivouacs, where residents commute to jobs in Israel proper. Secondly, the Israeli body politic doesn't really support all these settlements, least of all those put up by zealots such as the Ayatollah Levinger, described by Amos Elon in the April 21 *TNR*. Third, the settlements lose Israel support in the United States and create dismay in Jewry. Fourth, and maybe most significantly, they inflame the Arabs, who will not believe that compromise is possible.

The most revealing war in the world now is the Arab war against Sadat. There has always been enthusiasm among the Arab big talkers for fighting the Israelis to the last drop of Egyptian blood. The gang-up against Cairo represents a colossal failure of American prognostication and American policy. The onus falls most heavily on those who argued so confidently that fighter jets would buy Saudi acquiescence to the peace process. Anwar Sadat's determination not to be deflected from his people's first imperative is courage of a very high order, and Begin should demonstrate more concern for his peace partner's plight. But what does the now enlarged rejection front really want from Israel? Another compromise here? Another there? If one could believe that, there'd be some reason to hope for conciliation from Araby.

Ever since 1948, the American Embassy in Israel has been located in Tel Aviv. The capital of Israel is, of course, Jerusalem. But the US clings to the legal fiction that Jerusalem is, or should be, an internationalized city, according to the United Nations partition plan of 1947. The Israelis accepted that provision and all the other provisions in 1947. The Arabs didn't. As a result, there was war. In the current discussions of the future of Jerusalem, various State Department factota refer to east Jerusalem and the Old City as "occupied Arab territory." But under the partition plan, these areas also were supposed to be internationalized. It's either/or here: these areas can't be both "Arab" and "international." Jerusalem has been a predominantly Jewish city for at least two centuries. Not in two millennia has it been governed as tolerantly and openly as it is now. Late on the eve of Independence Day I walked around the festive and full streets. The Arabs were not precisely celebrating, but they were at peace and prosperous and, yes, even free. Jerusalem has been conquered, laid low and rubbled more times than scholars can number. Walk now in its streets, the turbulence beyond them notwithstanding, and it is possible to contemplate that "thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life."

M.P.

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Keep It Simple

Strike three.
Get your hand off my knee.
You're overdrawn.
Your horse won.
Yes.
No.
You have the account.
Walk.
Don't walk.
Mother's dead.
Basic events
require simple language.
Idiosyncratically euphuistic
eccentricities are the
promulgators of
triturable obfuscation.
What did you do last night?
Enter into a meaningful
romantic involvement
or
fall in love?
What did you have for
breakfast this morning?
The upper part of a hog's
hind leg with two oval
bodies encased in a shell
laid by a female bird
or
ham and eggs?
David Belasco, the great
American theatrical producer,
once said, "If you can't
write your idea on the
back of my calling
card
you don't have a clear idea."

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